

## COUSIN AGATHA.

BY MRS. EMMA C. EMBURY.

"O what a goodly outside falsehood hath."--SHAKESPEARE.

"I have been thinking, Henry, that I should like to invite cousin Agatha to spend the winter with us: what do you say to my plan?"

"Really, Alice, I can say nothing about it, since I know nothing of the lady."

"Oh, I had forgotten that you had never seen her; she is only distantly related to us, but being left an orphan at an early age, she became an inmate of our family and continued to reside with us until she married. Agatha is several years my senior, and entered society while I was yet in the school-room; she married rather in opposition to the wishes of my parents, as they approved neither of the profession nor the character of her husband, who was an officer in the army, and known to be a man of dissolute habits. Poor thing! she has fully paid the penalty of her folly during seven years of poverty and discomfort. Her husband has been sent from one frontier station to another, until the health of both was destroyed, and at the time of his death they were both at Sackett's Harbor."

"Then she is a widow?"

"Yes, her vile husband died about a year since, and cousin Agatha is released from bondage, but reduced to actual penury. I received a letter from her yesterday, the first she has written since my marriage, and she alludes most touchingly to her desolate condition as contrasted with my happiness."

"And that letter, I suppose, induced you to think of inviting her to spend the winter with us?"

"It did, Harry; for I felt as if it was almost selfish in me to be so happy when my early friend was pining in loneliness and poverty."

"I love the kindness of feeling which prompts you to such acts, dear Alice, but, to confess the truth, I would rather relieve your cousin's distresses in any other way."

"But there is no other way of doing so, Henry—she would not accept pecuniary aid from us: why do you object to her visit?"

"Because we are so happy that I dread any interruption to the calm current of our life."

"Thank you, dear Harry, I cannot find it in my heart to scold you for your selfishness," said the young wife, as she laid her hand on her husband's arm; "but really," she continued, "Cousin Agatha would be the last person in the world to disturb our tranquillity. She is full of gentleness and sentiment;

a creature of warm and affectionate impulses, and she would delight in adding to our enjoyments. You know my health will confine me to the house this winter, and you may find the long evenings hang heavy upon your hands."

"Not in your society, Alice."

"I am glad you think so, Harry; but when I am languid and dispirited from indisposition, you would find cousin Agatha a charming companion; besides, she would relieve me from some of the cares of house-keeping."

"Well, my dear, you offer so many good reasons in favor of her coming, that I can find no argument against it, but I have a sort of a presentiment that she will not be agreeable."

"Oh, Harry, how can you think so? if you could see her you would change your opinions very soon, for her picturesque appearance would charm your artistical taste."

"Is she very beautiful?"

"No, but she is just the person to please a painter, for there is so beautiful a combination of light and shade in her face. She has those grey eyes which, when fringed with long, dark lashes, are so full of varied expression, and her hair, black as the raven's wing, falls in heavy natural ringlets that put to shame the skill of a *coiffeur*."

"May she not be altered since you saw her, Alice?"

"True, I had forgotten that more than five years have passed since we last met; but, even if her person has changed, her heart, I am sure, has not, and when you know her you will thank me for my pertinacity in thus wringing your reluctant consent to her visit."

"If you think it will add to your enjoyments, Alice, invite her by all means."

Alice Wentworth had been a wife scarcely two years, and her married life had been a scene of uninterrupted happiness. Nothing would have induced her to risk the disturbance of her tranquillity, but remembering the companion of her early years as one who had been the confidant of all her childish joys and sorrows, she looked upon her presence as the completion of her plans of enjoyment. Her husband's scruples she naturally attributed to unfounded prejudice which an acquaintance with her cousin could not fail to overcome, and, therefore, following the dictates of kindly feeling, she determined to cheer

the bereaved widow by an affectionate letter of invitation.

Some three weeks after she had despatched her missive, at an early hour, on a cold autumnal morning, a carriage drove up to the door, and a loud ring announced the expected guest. Alice had not yet finished her morning toilet, and Mr. Wentworth hastened down to receive the lady; but scarcely had he got through the awkwardness of a self-introduction when his wife entered, full of impatience to embrace her early friend. During the mutual raptures of their meeting, he had leisure to scrutinize the new inmate of his family, and certainly his impressions were any thing but favorable. Cousin Agatha had taken a violent cold, her countenance was disfigured by a swollen cheek, and her eyes were bleared and inflamed by a severe attack of influenza, while the effect of steamboat slumbers and a steamboat toilet did not tend to the improvement of her appearance. Indeed Harry Wentworth could scarcely refrain from laughter when he contrasted his wife's enthusiastic description with the reality before him. But Alice, with ready hospitality, conducted her cousin to her apartment, and to that room the wearied traveller, overcome with illness and fatigue, was confined during the several succeeding days.

"When will your friend be presentable, Alice?" asked Mr. Wentworth one evening as he threw himself upon a sofa, after tea, "since she has been here you have not sat with me a half hour, for your whole time seems devoted to nursing."

"I hope she will be well enough to meet you at dinner to-morrow, Harry; the swelling has left her face and she begins to look like herself. What amuses you so much?" she asked, as her husband burst into a loud laugh.

"I was thinking of the force of contrast, Alice; you are an excellent painter, dear, but you draw your tints too exclusively from fancy; who could have recognized your *picturesque beauty* with soft *grey eyes* and *raven curls* in the dowdyish looking woman with red nose and redder eyes whom I welcomed as cousin Agatha?"

"For shame, Harry, you ought not to judge of her by her appearance at that time."

"Perhaps not; but first impressions are the most durable, and I shall never see any beauty in your cousin, for even if she should hereafter appear to advantage when dressed for display, I shall never forget how she looked in her travelling dishabille; one thing you may be sure of, Alley, you will never have cause to be jealous of your *picturesque* cousin."

"I don't mean to be jealous of any one, Harry, but I shall be much mistaken if you do not learn to admire cousin Agatha."

"Then you may prepare yourself for a disappointment, Alice; I do not think I should feel perfectly satisfied with any one who had thus broken in upon our tranquil happiness, and even if I were disposed to like your cousin elsewhere she would not please me in our quiet home. Besides, I was disappointed in my idea of her personal beauty, and her manners appeared to me abrupt and inelegant."

"Harry, you never were more mistaken in your life."

"Well, well—it will be difficult to convince me of my error." A slight rustle at the door was heard as Mr. Wentworth finished his ungallant speech, and the next moment cousin Agatha entered.

"I thought I would endeavor to make my way to the drawing-room instead of depriving you any longer of the society of your husband, dear Alice," said she as she languidly sank into the softly-cushioned chair which Mr. Wentworth drew forward for her accommodation. Of course the usual congratulations followed, and as the invalid dropped the heavy shawl from her shoulders, Alice glanced towards her husband in the hope that he would not fail to observe the symmetry of her petite figure. He was too great an admirer of beauty to fail in such notice, yet still he could see little to claim admiration in her face. Her complexion was not clear; her mouth, though well formed and adorned with superb teeth, was large, and her eyes were dim from recent illness, while her curls were hidden beneath one of those fairy fabrics of gossamer and ribbon which often display the taste of the wearer at the expense of a crowning beauty. But, ere the evening had expired, Mr. Wentworth was forced to acknowledge that he had formed too hasty an opinion of her manners, for, whatever *brusquerie* he might have observed on the morning of her arrival, he was certainly struck now by the easy elegance and graceful dignity of her deportment.

From this time cousin Agatha laid aside the character of an invalid, and, quietly taking her place at the table and fireside, seemed to have no other wish than to make herself useful. Devoted in her attentions to Alice, she took little notice of Mr. Wentworth except to receive his courteous civility with profound gratitude. He was nothing more to her than the husband of her friend, and while she exhibited the deepest interest in the development of Alice's mind and feelings, she seemed scarcely to observe the fine taste, the elegant scholarship, and the nobleness of sentiment which characterized Mr. Wentworth. Alice suffered no small degree of mortification from this evident coldness between those whom she was so anxious to behold friends. She could not bear to find Agatha so totally blind to the perfections of her beloved Henry, and she was almost as much annoyed at her husband's indifference to the graces of her cousin.

"You are pained because I do not sufficiently admire your husband, Alice," said Agatha, one day, when they were alone, "but surely you would not have me estimate him as highly as you do?"

"I would not have you love him quite as well, but I would have you appreciate his exalted qualities."

"My dear coz," said Agatha, with a slightly sarcastic smile, "do not, I pray you, make it one of the conditions of our friendship that I should see through your eyes. Mr. Wentworth is a fine scholar, a tolerable amateur painter, and a most ardent lover of his pretty wife; is that not sufficient praise?"

Alice felt uncomfortable, though she could scarcely

tell why, at this and similar remarks from cousin Agatha. She had been accustomed to consider her husband a being of superior worth and endowments, but there was something in her cousin's manner of uttering commendation of him, which seemed to imply contempt even while it expressed praise. In the innocence of her heart, Alice several times repeated cousin Agatha's sayings to her husband, and they were not without their effect upon him. The self-love which exists, more or less, in every heart, was by no means a negative quantity in the character of Mr. Wentworth. He knew his wife overrated his talents, but he loved her the better for her affectionate flattery, and cousin Agatha's apparent ignorance of his character mortified and vexed him. He began to think that his prejudices had prevented him from showing himself in a proper light, and his wounded vanity led him to redouble his attentions to his guest. Heretofore he had never thought of her except when in her company; but now, the certainty that she was as yet blind to his merits, made her an object of interest. He was not a very vain man, but his wife's idolatry had gratified even while he was fully aware of its extravagance, and he was proportionably annoyed by the perfect coldness with which cousin Agatha regarded him. She seemed to think him a very good sort of a man, but not at all superior to the common herd, and he was determined to convince her of her mistake. Agatha had succeeded in her first design:—she had aroused him from the torpor of indifference.

Cousin Agatha was a most invaluable assistant to a young housekeeper, for she had a quick hand, a ready invention, and exquisite taste, so that whether a pudding was to be concocted, a dress trimmed, or a party given, she was equally useful. Alice had learned the duties of housekeeping theoretically and was now only beginning to put them in practice, as every young wife must do, for whatever she may know in the home of her childhood, she still finds much to be learned in organizing and arranging a new household. Cousin Agatha, on the contrary, had been trained from her childhood to *do* all these things, for the dependent orphan had early learned to earn her bread by her own usefulness. In the course of her married life she had been compelled to practice the thousand expedients which pride and poverty teach to a quick-witted woman, and it is not surprising, therefore, that her skill should far surpass that of the gentle and self-distrusting Alice. Doubting her own knowledge only because Agatha was near to advise, the young wife applied to her on all occasions, until at length the regulation of domestic affairs was entirely in her hands, and Alice was left only to assist in the execution of Agatha's plans. Cousin Agatha was always busied in some pretty feminine employment. She had very beautiful hands, and her long taper fingers were always engaged in some delicate needle-work or an elegant piece of tapestry. Did it ever occur to you, my fair reader, that a pretty hand never appears to such advantage as when busied with the needle? The piano extends the fingers until the hand sometimes resembles a bird's claw;—the pencil

or the pen contracts it until half its beauty is concealed; but needle-work, with the various turnings and windings necessary to its accomplishment, displays both hands in perfectly natural positions and in every variety of grace. This fact was not unknown to cousin Agatha; she had no accomplishments, but she was rarely seen without the tiniest of gold thimbles upon her slender finger.

Slowly and by scarcely perceptible degrees, Agatha seemed to learn the full value of the prize which her friend had drawn in the lottery of life. His fine talents seemed to dawn upon her with daily increasing vividness, his amateur sketches became more and more characterized by genius, his musical taste developed itself surprisingly, and, ere many weeks had elapsed, Alice had the satisfaction of repeating to her husband many a heart-warm compliment breathed into the ear of the happy wife by cousin Agatha in her hours of confidential communing with her friend. Nor was Mr. Wentworth slower in discovering the latent charms of his guest. Restored to her former health, and associating as the guest of Mrs. Wentworth, in a pleasant circle of society, cousin Agatha threw aside the weeds of widowhood, and appeared in all the attractive coquetry of tasteful and becoming dress. Her luxuriant tresses were once more allowed to shadow her low feminine brow, and fall upon her graceful neck, or, if bound up in conformity with fashion, the very restraint was studiously arranged in such a manner as to display their rich redundancy. Her grey eyes sometimes seemed actually flashing with light, and again were filled with the soft liquid lustre of intense sensibility; and then her smile, displaying her brilliant teeth and lighting up her whole face, had the effect of a sudden sunbeam upon a darkened landscape. The charm of Agatha's face was its vivid and varied expression; the grace of her person was the effect of long and carefully studied art. Not a look, not a gesture, not even a movement of her fringed eyelids, but was the result of frequent practice. There was a perfection of grace in her attitudes that seemed like Nature's self. Her head always assumed a pretty position, her curls always seemed to drop in their proper place, her drapery always fell in becoming folds, and no one observed that she was particular in avoiding cross lights, especially careful not to face a broad glare of sunshine, and remarkably fond of placing herself at the arm of a sofa, so as to obtain a fine back ground for the exhibition of her attitudes. Harry Wentworth wondered how he could ever have thought her ugly. And then her manners:—what could be more gentle, more feminine, more fascinating than the tenderness of her tones and the sweetness of her deportment? She seemed to look upon gentlemen as if she felt all a woman's helplessness, and was willing to consider man as a "*chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*," born to be her natural protector. There was something so pleading in the soft eyes which she lifted to the face of the sterner sex, that few could resist their charm, and actually Harry Wentworth was not one of those few.

Long before the time fixed for the termination of

Agatha's visit, Alice had urged her to prolong her stay, and, when Mr. Wentworth added his earnest entreaties, she was induced to promise that she would set no other limit to its duration than such as circumstances might create. But as week after week fled by, Alice began to doubt whether she had acted wisely in making this request. She was ashamed to acknowledge even to herself the feeling, but, somehow or other, she was not quite as happy as she had been before cousin Agatha's coming. She attributed it to the nervous irritability from which she was now suffering, and endeavored to think that when she should once more recover her health, she would find her former enjoyment in Agatha's society. But Agatha sometimes made such singular remarks;—they were uttered with the utmost simplicity and *nâiveté*; her smile was full of sweetness, her tones like the summer breeze when she spoke, and yet the import of her words was excessively cutting and sarcastic. There was often an implied censure in her manner of replying to Alice—not in the words themselves, but rather in their application, which the young wife, sick and dispirited, felt perhaps too keenly. Alice was uncomfortable and yet she scarcely could tell why. A shadow was resting upon her path, and she felt, although she saw it not, that there was a cloud in her sunny sky. The idea that she was no longer absolutely essential to her husband's comfort sometimes crossed her mind. During the many hours which she was obliged to spend in her own apartment, she found that Henry was fully occupied with his game of chess, or his favorite book in company with cousin Agatha, and though it seemed only a realization of her own wishes, yet she was not prepared to find herself so entirely thrown into the back-ground of the family picture.

At length Alice became a mother, and in the new emotions awakened in her bosom, she forgot her vague feelings of discomfort. Mr. Wentworth was too proud and happy to think of anything but his boy, and when Alice beheld him bending over their cradled treasure with a feeling almost of awe as well as love, she wondered how she could ever have felt unhappy for a moment. Cousin Agatha seemed to share in all their joy, and in the presence of the father she fondled and caressed the child as gracefully as possible.

"Do you not think, Alice," said she one day, as she sat with the babe lying on her lap, while Wentworth bent fondly over it, "do you not think your sweet little Harry resembles poor Charles Wilson?"

"No, indeed I do not," exclaimed Alice, quickly, while the blood mounted to her pallid cheek and brow.

"Well, I certainly see a strong likeness; there is the same peculiar dimple in the chin, which neither you nor Mr. Wentworth have, and even the color of his eyes reminds me of Charles," said cousin Agatha.

"His eyes are like his father's," said Alice, "and nothing is more common than to see in the face of a child a dimple which entirely disappears in later life."

"Well, Alice, dear, I did not mean to awaken any

painful reminiscence by my remark; I did not know you were so sensitive on the subject." These words were uttered in the blindest tones, and the sweet smile which accompanied them was as beautiful as a sunbeam on a troubled sea; but Alice felt both pained and vexed. Agatha had recurred to the only unpleasant recollections of her whole life, and she could not determine whether it had been done by design, or was merely the result of thoughtlessness. The remark had not been without its effect upon Mr. Wentworth. He saw with surprise the evident vexation of his wife at the mention of Charles Wilson's name, and while he feared to ask an explanation from her in her present feeble state of health, he determined to satisfy his curiosity by appealing to cousin Agatha.

"Did you never hear of Charles Wilson?" exclaimed Agatha, in great apparent surprise, when, a few hours afterwards, he asked the question.

"Never until I heard you mention him," was the reply.

"Then I ought not to tell you anything about him, because I cannot betray the confidence of a friend."

"But as a friend I entreat you to tell me."

"It is impossible, Mr. Wentworth:—what Alice has thought best to conceal I certainly will not disclose; strange that she should not have told you; there certainly ought to be the most perfect confidence between husband and wife."

"Agatha, you have excited such a painful interest in the secret, whatever it is, that I must know it."

"You will not betray me to Alice if I tell you?"

"Certainly not, if secrecy be the only condition on which I can learn the truth."

"And you promise not to think harshly of poor Alice?"

"It would be strange if I should think other than well of one whose purity of heart is so well known to me."

"Well, then," replied the insidious woman, with a slight, a very slight sneer on her lip, "since you have such undoubting faith in your wife there can be no harm in telling you. But really we are making a great affair of a very trifling occurrence. Charles Wilson was a clerk to Alice's father, and while she was yet at school, he made love to her in the hope of enticing her into a clandestine marriage. Alice was only about fifteen, and like all girls of her age was delighted with a first lover. He lived in the house with us, and of course enjoyed many opportunities of meeting her, so that before we knew anything about it, an elopement was actually planned. I happened to discover it, and as my duty required, I made it known to her parents. The consequence was that Wilson was dismissed and Alice sent to boarding-school; I dare say she has thanked me for it since, though then she could not forgive me. You look pained, Mr. Wentworth. I hope my foolish frankness has not made you unhappy. I really thought it such a childish affair that I felt no hesitation in alluding to it to-day, supposing that Alice had lost all sensitiveness about it, and I was never more surprised



than by her evident agitation. However, I confess I was wrong; I ought to have known that an early disappointment is not easily forgotten even in the midst of happiness."

"How long since this happened?" asked Mr. Wentworth.

"Just before I was married—I suppose about eight years ago; I wonder Alice did not tell you the whole story, but she is such a timid creature that I suppose she could not summon courage enough to be perfectly frank with you."

Wentworth made no reply, but the poisoned arrow had reached its mark. His confidence in his wife was shaken; he had not been the first love of her young heart,—she had loved and been beloved,—she had plighted her faith even in her girlhood, and the creature whom he believed to be as pure in heart as an infant, had narrowly escaped the degradation of a clandestine marriage with an inferior. He was shocked and almost disgusted; he felt heartsick, and even the sight of his child, connected as it now was with the similitude of the early lover, was painful to him. He recalled a thousand trifling circumstances which would pass by unheeded but for cousin Agatha's kind attempts to explain Alice's meaning, and all now corroborated his suspicions of his wife's perfect sincerity. The more he discussed the matter with Agatha, the more dissatisfied did he become with Alice; and in proportion as she fell in his estimation the frank and noble character of Agatha arose. There was a high-toned sentiment about her, a sense of honor and an intensity of feeling which added new charms to her expressive countenance and graceful manners. Wentworth was not *in love* with Agatha, but he was a little *out of love* with his wife, and the constant presence of such a fascinating woman, at such a moment, was certainly somewhat dangerous. More than once he caught himself regretting that Alice was not more like her cousin, and long before Alice was well enough to leave her apartment, he had become quite reconciled to her absence from the drawing-room. Alice felt his increasing neglect, but she dared not allow herself to attribute it to its true cause. Cousin Agatha was so kind, so attentive to her, and studied so much the comfort of Mr. Wentworth, that she almost hated herself for the growing dislike which she was conscious of feeling towards her.

One day, about two months after the birth of her babe, Alice, who had been suffering from a slow fever, felt so much better that she determined to surprise her husband by joining him at dinner. Wrapping a shawl about her, she slowly proceeded down stairs, and finding the drawing-room door partly open, entered so silently as not to disturb the occupants of the apartment. Mr. Wentworth was lying on a sofa, while cousin Agatha sat on a low ottoman beside him, with one hand threading the mazes of his bright hair, while the other was clasped in his. The face of Agatha was hidden from her, but the wretched wife beheld the eyes of her husband upturned towards it with the most vivid expression of fondness and passion. Her very soul grew sick as she gazed;

she turned to glide from the room and fell senseless on the threshold. Weeks had elapsed ere she recovered her consciousness. The sudden shock which her weakened nerves had sustained, produced inflammation of the brain, and for many an anxious day her husband watched beside her sick bed, dreading lest every hour should be her last. She lay in a state of stupor, and her first signs of returning consciousness was the shiver that ran through her frame when the voice of cousin Agatha struck upon her ear.

Mr. Wentworth was conscience-stricken when, aroused by the sound of her fall, he had beheld Alice lying lifeless on the floor. He uttered not a word of enquiry, but he readily divined the cause of her condition, and, as he bore her to her apartment, he almost hated himself for the brief delirium in which his senses had been plunged. He could not be said to love Agatha, but her fascinations had not been without their effect upon his ardent nature. He did not attempt to analyse his feelings, but yielding to the spell which enthralled him, abandoned himself to the enjoyment of her blandishments. Hour after hour had he spent in listening to the false sentiment which fell from her lips in the most honied accents,—evening after evening had he consumed in attending her to parties of pleasure,—day after day had been bestowed on the completion of her portrait, while Alice was left to the solitude of her sick room. But now, when he beheld her stricken down at his very feet, the scales seemed to fall from his eyes, and his infidelity of heart appeared to him in all its true wickedness. The toils which the insidious Agatha had woven about him were broken as if by magic, and his wife, his long-suffering, wronged Alice was dearer to him than all the world beside. He watched by her with all the kindness of early affection, and well did he understand her abhorrent shudder at the presence of Agatha. His devoted attention and the *adieux* of cousin Agatha, who now found it necessary to terminate her visit, had no small share in restoring Alice to convalescence.

Alice was slowly regaining health and strength; the faint tint of the wild-rose was once more visible on her thin cheek, and her feeble step had again borne her to the room so fraught with painful remembrances. But far different were the feelings with which she now revisited that neglected apartment. Cousin Agatha was gone,—she was once more alone with her husband, and with true womanly affection she willingly forgot his past errors in his present tenderness. But there were some things yet to be explained before perfect confidence could exist between them. The serpent had been driven from their Paradise, but its trail had been left on many a flower;—the shadow of distrust still lay dark upon the pleasant paths of domestic peace, and yet both shrunk from uttering the mystic word which might chase its gloom forever. But the moment of explanation came. A letter from cousin Agatha was placed in the hands of Alice, and repressing the shudder with which she looked upon it, she proceeded to peruse it; but scarcely had she read three lines, when, with an exclamation of surprise, she handed it to her husband, and telling him

it interested him no less than herself, begged him to read it aloud. It was as follows:

"MY SWEET COUSIN,

"I write to repeat my thanks for the exceeding kindness and hospitality which I received while an inmate of your family. I feel especially bound to do this, because, as I am on the point of embarking for France, I may be unable for several years to offer my acknowledgments in person. You are doubtless surprised, but you will perhaps be still more so when I tell you that I am going to join *my husband*. Our marriage took place more than a year since, but we thought it prudent to conceal it both on account of my then recent widowhood, and because my husband was not then of age. His guardian was opposed to his union with your penniless cousin, and he was sent off on a European tour to avoid me; but we were secretly married before his departure, and as he has now attained his majority, he has written to me to meet him in Paris, where I hope to find that domestic felicity which I failed to derive from my former unhappy connection. By the way, my dear Alice, I fancied, when I was at your house, that there was some little coldness existing between you and your husband. I sincerely hope that I was mistaken, and that it was my love for you which rendered me too observant of the little differences which frequently occur in married life. I think Mr. Wentworth was piqued about your early engagement with Charles Wilson; you had better explain the matter to him and he will probably find as little cause for his jealousy as, I assure you, there was for yours. Don't pout, dear Alice, you certainly *were* a little jealous of me, but I only flirted harmlessly with your husband *pour passer le tems*; and perhaps a little out of revenge. I wanted to try whether a '*little dowdyish red-nosed woman*' could have any attractions for him."

"By Jupiter! she must have been listening at the door when I was discussing the subject of her ill-looks just after her arrival," exclaimed Mr. Wentworth.

"Yes, and mortified vanity will account for her well-practised seductions, Harry," said Alice; "but let us hear the end of this precious epistle." Mr. Wentworth resumed:

"I hope he has fallen into his old habits again and is as fond and lover-like as I found him on my arrival. One piece of advice I must give you, my sweet Alice; do not trust him too much with those who have greater powers of fascination than his little wife, for believe me, he possesses a very susceptible nature. Do not be such a good spouse as to show him my letter. Remember I write to you with my usual impudent frankness. Kiss little Harry for me and remember me most kindly to your amiable husband.

"Ever your devoted friend and cousin,

"AGATHA."

"P.S. Can I send you any *nicknackery* from Paris? I shall be delighted to be of service to you."

"Well, that is as characteristic a letter as I ever read," exclaimed Wentworth as he flung it on the table; "how adroitly she mingles her poison with her sweetmeats; and how well she has managed to affix a sting at the last: I wonder whom she has duped into a marriage."

"Some foolish boy, doubtless, for she speaks of him as being just of age, while she will never again see her thirtieth summer," said Alice; "but what does she mean Harry about my early engagement with Charles Wilson? He was a clerk to my father."

"She told me a long story Alice about a proposed elopement between you and this said Charles Wilson which had been prevented by her interference."

"Good Heavens! Harry how she must have misrepresented the affair. Wilson was in papa's employ and probably fancied it would be a good speculation if he could marry his employer's daughter. He became exceedingly troublesome to me by his civilities, and finally made love to me in plain terms, when I communicated the whole affair to cousin Agatha, and begged her to tell papa of it, because I was such a child that I was ashamed to tell him myself. She did so, and Wilson was dismissed; but I was then only a school girl."

"You seemed so agitated when she recurred to the subject that I readily believed her story."

"I was vexed, Harry, because she insinuated that there was a likeness between our dear boy and that vulgar fellow."

"How I have been deceived by a fiend in the form of an angel," exclaimed Wentworth; "we should have been saved much suffering if she had never entered our doors."

"Indeed we should, Harry, and I shall never cease to reproach myself for my folly in introducing such a serpent into our Elysium."

"Your motives were kind and good, Alice; and though it has been to you a severe lesson in the deceitfulness of the world, and to me a still more painful one in the deceitfulness of my own heart, yet, I trust, that to both of us it may not be without its salutary influences."

## CURING A LOVER.

BY B. B. THOM.

## CHAPTER I.

"My dear Fanny, I am in a terrible state of agitation—I am *ennuied*—I am out of spirits—I am frightfully excited; for you must know that I am threatened—yes, threatened with the exhibition of a most horrible scene here this very day." The speaker was a pretty actress who had turned the heads of all the beaux frequenting Covent Garden Theatre. She was consequently not without a spice of vanity—what pretty woman is!—although she had an under-current of good sense which prevented her head from being altogether turned by the flattery she daily received. The person whom she addressed was her confidante.

"What can be the matter, my dear Maria? Has some one of your numerous admirers fallen out with you?"

"No—no; the fops that cluster around me have neither head nor heart."

"What then—have you had a visit from your old aunt, Dorothea?"

"Nor that either; I have got rid of her."

"Then what is it harasses you so much?"

"This—and oh! my dear Fanny, do you not pity me! A young fellow (for such I suppose him to be) has written me a letter, stating that he intends to come here at four o'clock, and to blow his brains out under my very windows!!!"

"Psha! he's a fool."

"Yes; but a fool that is dying in love. A run-a-way from St. Luke's, that has been reading Werther. Here is the fiftieth letter, at least; that I have had from him—from the poor deserted young man, who calls himself "Cornelius." At first he said he wished to live for my sake. That was bad enough! but now he threatens to die beneath my 'lovely eyes'—that is awful! 'Now, what I want to know is, has a lady a right to let an enamored swain die, when the individual himself has no desire to live!'"

"What you ought to do, in my opinion, is this—admit him to your presence. If he be clever he will amuse us, and you may condescend to request of him to live. But if he be a fool—why then let him kill himself; perhaps it is the very best thing he can do for his family, and the most useful thing he may ever attempt for the benefit of society."

"Yes—but if I tell him to live, he may, like a thousand others, plague me with the unmeaning, frivolous declaration of his affection, when you know I care for none but Henry—that I intend to marry."

"Then, if he should become such a bore, you must only treat him as you do 'a promise to pay'—you are

accountable for the bill, and never think of it; the day of payment comes, and it is protested, and then—it is out of your mind for ever."

"But would there not be something like a want of truth in all this?"

"Not at all—it would be mere coquetry. Such an admirer is like the last new novel—you may give an hour or so to it, if it is amusing, and if dull, why fling it in the corner."

"Yes—but if the book should become so agreeable, that I may wish to read it to the third volume?"

"Why, then my dear—Providence may have great blessings in store for you; and as to your poor Henry he—will be to be pitied."

The chat of these two friends was interrupted by Miss Maria's chambermaid, who thus addressed her mistress—

"Oh! 'la! Miss, there is *such* a very odd man below stairs. He is a great, big, fat person, six feet high, and with such very, very red hair—and he must be ninety years old I'm certain; and he is so vulgar, and speaks with such an accent—and he insists upon seeing you. I'm sure he must be an Irishman, or a creditor; he is so very impudent—I shut the door in his face."

"Then go and open it again, Sally. If he is an Irishman, he will amuse us with his brogue and his speechifications, being a composition of something that is not elevated enough for poetry, nor sufficiently intelligible to be prose. We shall laugh at him, and he in return will sing our praises in the wilds of Connaught or the banks of the Liffey; and if, as I believe he is, a creditor, I will begin by—not paying him a single farthing. Then I shall get rid of him by giving him an order for a private box, and there I can look at him applauding me, because I am determined to—die his debtor, Sally, tell him to walk up: and Fanny, do you take a seat there, and if it be necessary come to my rescue."

The two pretty young women set themselves down on the sofa together, while the servant hurried off to introduce the singular and mysterious visitor.

## CHAPTER II.

THE individual who now entered the room was a man apparently about sixty years of age. He was in height at least six feet three inches, and was as fat as Lablache. He had an immense nose, and an enormous face that was covered with a beard and whiskers that were half red and half white. His large grey eyes opened with astonishment upon the exquisite beauties that he saw before him. He became in an instant confused and utterly embarrassed. He had to make a bow; but he bowed at the same time with head, hand, and foot—and, having performed this extraordinary feat, he continued to gaze at the ladies, who threw at him the most enchanting looks, although they spoke not. At length silence was broken by the stranger.

"Your servant, ladies—your servant, I say. But may be you don't know who I am no more than the stupid waiter at the Golden Cross; although there's not a ragged boy in Patrick-street that couldn't tell that my name is Corney O'Donoghue, of Drisheen Park. Now then, as you know myself in person, might I be so bold as to be after askin' which of the two of you is Miss Maria Garnett?"

"It is I, sir," answered the inimitable actress, lowly bending my head. "I perceive that you never honor Covent Garden with your presence."

"There never was a truer word said by your purty lips, my dear. The dickens a garden or orchard I ever was in all London—because why, I'm only this very day landed from Cork city."

"Oh! he is an Irish poet," whispered Miss Garnett to her friend.

"But do you see me now," continued Mr. O'Donoghue, as he clapped his enormous fist on the gilded back of a chair; "do you see me now, Miss; when I am at home in Drisheen Park, it's my fashion to ask a stranger to sit down at all events, and may be, too, to ask him if he has a mouth upon him; but it is not the custom here, I see, and so as I am completely knocked up, and bothered, I'll take the liberty of taking a chair, though I was never offered one."

"He is a creditor," remarked Miss Archer.

"Now, I'll be bound you want to know what brought me all the way to London," continued the visitor; "why, then, the long and short of it is this—I have two sons, two as fine-looking boys as ever made the prattles vanish out of a dish. Well, now, just listen to me, one of these fellows the occupation of his father."

"You are a grocer, sir, I presume."

"I'm an Irish gentleman, ma'am, and one of my ancestors was the King of the Barony of Whackaway-nacrooshta, in the good old times; and as for myself and my eldest son, we can tell the difference between a pig's head and its crubeen, without twice looking at it. But that's not the matter that has brought me here at all, at all. It is in the regard of my second son, that I have come to London. I sent him here about a year ago, to be learning the law and good manners (and the never a worse school I'm thinking he could come to for that same) and the fact is I want to make him a counsellor."

"That must be a very fine situation in life, I suppose, sir, especially for a gentleman from the city of Cork."

"Not a doubt of it; but now, what is the fact, the deuce a counsellor ever he'll be, and all by reason of you. You have turned his brain, that is what you have, Miss Garnett. He is dying in love for you, the omathaun!"

"Indeed! and is he handsome?"

"Handsome!—there's not the like of him between this and the Mardyke; but what's the use of his being a beauty, when he neither can eat, sleep, nor drink a

tumbler of punch. Did you ever know of an Irishman refusing his liquor before now? Well now—what's brought me here is to tell you, that you must not be letting my son fall in love with you, and what's more, I desire that you'll never let him inside the door; for if you do I'll—swear the peace against you."

"Oh! dear! how very frightful!"

"I really beg your pardon, Miss, for speaking so mighty cross to you. And, in truth, when I look at you, its little I can blame my poor son for falling in love with your purty face. By dad! if I was only nineteen, I don't think I could help doing that same myself."

"Sir, you are too flattering."

"Why then, now, Miss Garnett dear, or, considering your bright eyes, Miss Diamond, only just remember that he's barely anything more than a hobbledohoy, and if he continues to be desperately in love with you, he'll never think of his studies, never be made a counsellor, and perhaps never have the slightest chance of rising to be a chief justice, or lord chancellor, or an assistant barrister."

"But is he really disposed to go to the bar?"

"Whew! why he's cut out for it. Did you ever hear of an Irishman that wasn't fit for everything, from a secretary of state to a common policeman? Sure, there's not a mother's son of us that's not born a genius; and as to being disposed for the bar, sure, we're all disposed for it, we have such a power of prate."

"Then, Sir, I am much obliged to you for putting me on my guard against your son. I never could endure a lawyer, nor a law student either. But, may I ask you, what is your son's name?"

"My son's name, Miss, is the same as his father's; and I could tell you you could get some money for it, if you had it on a stamp, at the fair of Doneraile. My son's name is 'Cornelius.'"

"Cornelius! Is it Cornelius? Then, my dear Sir, read this letter. Is that your son's writing?"

"That is his hand and mark, as sure as that Cork stands on the river Lee!"

"Well then, Sir, only think that this fool of a son of yours tells me, in this billet doux, that he intends coming here to shoot himself under my very window."

"Oh, Lord! is it to blow his beautiful brains out?"

"Do not be too much alarmed. I shall take care he does not hurt himself."

"Ah! then do, like a little darling. Only think, that the lives of all the O'Donoghues are in your hands; for if he attempts to shoot himself, then I may never go home, but I'll kick the life out of him, and be hanged for the murder of young Corney. Pray, Miss, don't let him shoot himself!"

"Never fear; and in order that I may begin the task of preserving him, I shall grant him the interview he

asks for. Up to this moment, I assure you, I have never seen him."

"But sure, if he sees you face to face it's all over; mad in love he'll be."

"I admit that it will be difficult to cure him."

"Aye, but are not you going to take a way that will render it impossible?"

"Not at all. Leave everything to me, and I engage to send him home to you as sensible as yourself."

"And soon. Now mind, Miss."

"This very day you shall see him, perfectly cured, at Charing Cross Hotel."

"Why then, long life and a good husband to you, Miss Garnett. Good morning to you. By the powers! but you are beautiful. One would suppose that you were born in Cork."

### CHAPTER III.

A few minutes after the departure of Mr. Corney O'Donoughue, of Drisheen Park, Sally entered the apartment; and by the announcement of a very important piece of intelligence, she put an end to the loud laughter of the two friends. Sally announced that the young gentleman who had written fifty billets, the runaway from St. Luke's, the unhappy "Cornelius," was below in the parlor, waiting for an answer to his last letter, either to be admitted to an interview, or to put an end to his existence in the street. Miss Garnett instantly took up the pen, and wrote these words:—

"We ought not to allow all fools to perish, at least, without making one effort to save them. You may, therefore, come."

"Sally," said she, "take this to the young gentleman below stairs, and then show him into the back drawing-room."

The instant Miss Garnett was alone with her friend, she resolved upon playing a trick upon the amorous young law-student. She was an excellent actress, a most accomplished dresser, and, therefore, was pretty certain of her success. With a disinterestedness, and an absence of selfishness, which are very rarely found in a beautiful woman, she resolved to metamorphose herself, if it were possible, into an ugly woman. First she placed over her splendid dress a large black apron, which belonged to her waiting-maid; then she took a thick red, heavy shawl, that effectually concealed her exquisite neck and delicate waist. She next placed coarse mittens upon her fair and delicate hands; and then she put a very small quantity of carmine upon the tip of her nose, wiped whitish powder upon her brows, and then took a stage snuff-box, filled with some harmless mixture, with which she darkened her upper lip.

Thus made up, thus disguised, thus calumniated, outraged, and metamorphosed by herself, she took a long look at the glass, and saw that her charming face

and person were no longer recognizably recognizable. Being perfectly content that she should be able to gratify the wishes of Mr. O'Donoughue senior, she rung for her servant to admit Mr. Cornelius to her presence.

Cornelius entered the room, and suddenly stopped; for he was terrified at his own happiness. He was pale, moveless, without sight, and without voice. He saw himself in the house of the celebrated actress; he was in the same room with *his* "Juliet," *his* "Desdemona," *his* "Letitia Hardy." He was about to speak to her, far from the theatre, far from the public gaze, and alone too. It seemed to him as if he never could have the courage to raise his eyes to that divine creature, nor the power to speak to her, nor the boldness to answer her, nor the audacity to express his adoration of her. At last he advanced two or three paces, and then looked upon the two actresses, as if he were trying to recognize which was *the one* that he had fallen in love with from the stage box. Miss Garnett did not leave him long in doubt.

"Take a seat, Sir," said she, "and remain, if you please, at a little distance."

"A distance!" thought Cornelius, as he placed himself on the very edge of a chair.

"Well, Sir, what makes you sit there, with your eyes fixed on the ground, like a bold boy at school, who has been scolded for not learning his lesson. Why don't you look at me?"

"Oh, Heavens! *this* is surely not Miss Garnett," exclaimed Cornelius, with his eyes fixed on the lady.

"Yes, but it is Miss Garnett. Oh! now I see what surprises you. I suppose you thought you would see me in my own house, as if I were dressed up for the stage, and going on as 'Juliet.' You wanted to have me with my cheeks painted red, and my nose whitened, and my neck bare, and my arms uncovered. Oh! my good young lad, that is all very well for the foot-lights; but when the curtain falls I am plain Maria Garnett once again. I attend to the affairs of the house, I see the cookery is all right; and, you must know, I am unequalled at made dishes. When I get home I am as you see me now. I keep myself nice, snug, cosy, warm, and comfortable; and when I am annoyed by visitors, I—take snuff!"

"Then how in the world is it that you appear so very different on the stage?" said the disappointed lover, driven out of all patience; "how is it that you enchain all hearts; that all who see you feel inclined to write poetry?"

"Talking of poetry," said she, "have you seen the pretty verses that Tom Moore has written upon me. Instead of the 'Lines to Maria,' I should have preferred him sending me a good Cheshire cheese."

"But then the fame, the renown, and the glory that such a poet must give you."

"Fame, renown, and glory, are three hypocrites, and I never ask them home with me. When I go to the play-house they *seem* to accompany me; they flatter, they caress, and they applaud me; but when I return to my dressing-room I bid them good night; they go to sleep, and so do I. That, Sir, is my pride—but will you take a pinch of snuff?"

"Oh, Tom Moore! Tom Moore!" murmured the distracted lover. "Only fancy the idol that you have immortalized as the perfection of beauty, snuffing up handfuls of filthy black rappee."

"And now, Mr. Cornelius, answer me truly and frankly. Do you still intend to shoot yourself on my account?"

"No, Miss Garnett. No, no. Heaven forbid!"

"That is said like a sensible little man, as I am sure you are. To die for love is the most preposterous thing possible. Only fancy, a barber in the next street hung himself last week for love of my servant girl, Sally, and she—has horrid bad teeth. But now pledge me your honor, and the honor of your highly respectable father and his interesting family, that you will live."

"I give you my own honor, and the honor of my father, and the honor of all the O'Donoughues, that I will live as long as I can. And this, at all events, you may rely upon, that I will never again think of shooting myself for—an actress."

"Good bye, then, Mr. Cornelius. I mean never to forget you; and should I ever be engaged in a lawsuit, you may depend on it, I shall retain you as my leading counsel."

Miss Garnett rose and curtsied to the enamored swain, and Sally showed him to the door, inside of which he was resolved never again to enter. His love was perfectly cured. He returned to his father, who, a few years afterward, had the happiness of seeing his son as "Counsellor" O'Donoughue, and giving to his clients at the assizes, the benefit of his legal knowledge: though, I am sorry to add, it could not prevent the majority of them from being transported beyond the seas for the period of their natural lives.

Written for the Ladies' Garland.

## DISAPPOINTMENT OF THE HEART: OR, DISOBEDIENCE TO PARENTS PUNISHED.

BY MRS. LYDIA JANE PEIRSON.

Mr. and Mrs. Sinclair were a beautiful couple; and if wealth, with its accompaniments of luxury, elegance, and honor, can bestow happiness, they were certainly happy. It was said that they loved each other sincerely; and treated each other with great deference and politeness on all occasions. They were accounted a pattern couple; a lord and lady to be envied. Yet they had buried two beautiful little ones, each in the first month of their existence, and a cloud, which dwelt ever on Mrs. Sinclair's beautiful countenance, was attributed to grief for their loss. This was only natural, and Mrs. Sinclair expressed the most perfect submission and resignation on the subject. Their intimate friends, however, sometimes shook their heads, and hinted at something wrong between them, which the world regarded as a barefaced slander. This is a truth, however; the lady was fond of seclusion, and lonely rambles, and was often seen weeping in a green bower, or beside a babbling brook, and yet she was no poetess. There certainly was mystery in this; for Mr. Sinclair was either a kind and tender husband, or a consummate hypocrite, for he always treated his wife with delicate affection.

An uncommonly severe winter had just resigned his dominion, and spring had smiled away the ice and snow-drifts from the bosom of the earth, which began to put forth here and there a tuft of green, or a cluster of early flowers, in token of awakening warmth and love. Mrs. Sinclair walked alone in the field and grove, answering with sighs the carol of the blue bird, and dewing with tears the meek sweet blossoms.

Raising at length her downcast eyes, she observed standing pensively beside a stream, half concealed by the budding streamers of an old weeping willow, against the trunk of which she supported her delicate and apparently feeble frame, a lady, in whose sorrow marked beauty and sad tender eyes, she instantly recognized a kindred spirit. An acquaintance was easily commenced between them, and they found great consolation in sighing and weeping in company. Mrs. Sinclair soon paid a visit to her sister in affliction; alas, although their spirits were kindred, there seemed no affinity in their worldly circumstances.

Mrs. Howard dwelt in a small cottage, with no other companion than a young country girl, who performed the duties of maid and footman. Mrs. Sinclair, however, insisted that an intimacy should exist between them, and accordingly it was established.

During several unceremonious visits, Mrs. Sinclair endeavored, by frequent hints of her own unhappiness, to win the confidence of her fair young neighbor. At length she resolved to divide her own sorrows by confiding them to her friend, whose secrecy and sympathy she was confident might be wholly confided in. She accordingly paid a visit to her; it was in the early part of June when all the world is love and beauty. Seated with Mrs. Howard in the little parlor, fragrant with the breath of the bright blooms that looked smilingly in at the windows, the ladies held communion of sorrow, until at length Mrs. Sinclair thus commenced her own history:—

"I have not long to remain a denizen of this vale of sorrow, my dear friend; I am dying of a concealed and therefore more surely fatal disease. No balm can reach my wound; no soothing take away my pain. I bear in my bosom a crushed and bleeding heart. I have loved—ah! too fervently. Heaven only knows how truly I still worship at a forbidden shrine. I know that you will sympathize with my sorrows, for I feel instinctively that you are also suffering from a disappointment of the heart. At the early age of seventeen, I met at a public ball one whom my heart did homage to. He was the perfection of manly beauty; his education was superior; his address captivating; his wit brilliant. I attracted his attention, and the admiration which I felt for him was fully reciprocated; yet for many days I sighed over his cherished idea in hopelessness of ever meeting him again. My health began gradually to decline, and a fixed melancholy to shadow my natural cheerful spirit. My physician advised exercise in the open air, on horseback. It was near a month after that memorable ball, that, as I was riding with a bevy of young companions along the river road, my horse suddenly took fright, and rearing and plunging, seemed about to precipitate himself and me into the swollen stream. At this moment a gentleman sprang from a passing carriage, and rescued me from my perilous situation. I fainted in his arms, and you may judge of my surprise and joy when, on my recovery, I found that my deliverer was him whom I so ardently loved. He accompanied me home, and for several days continued his visits, until I found myself irrevocably his. Before, however, he made any declaration of the love which beamed in his eye and spoke in every gesture, my father commanded me to break off all intimacy with him. Some envious creature had traduced the noble youth, and my father gave heed to the vile slander; and when I refused to pierce his heart by a cold and haughty demeanor, my proud and punctilious father gave him plainly to understand, that his visits



would thereafter be considered unwelcome intrusions, and also hinted at the aspersions which lay upon his character. In all the agony of offended pride, and a wounded yet lofty spirit, the insulted gentleman bade me an everlasting farewell. Oh! the fearful agony of that hour! The iron then entered into my soul. I sunk under the leaden burden of despair. For several weeks a delirious fever held me on the brink of the dark river of death. This insensibility undoubtedly prolonged my life; for when at length the fever left me, my mind and body were so debilitated, that even the dark current of despair flowed feebly on. It was long before I recovered sufficiently to go out, and when I did, the deep melancholy that shadowed my invalid beauty, awoke a deeper feeling than admiration in all that looked upon me. Mr. Sinclair soon professed himself my lover. He was unexceptionable, as his fortune, character, and person were all above mediocrity. My father urged me to accept his hand, and in the heartlessness of my despair, I consented to become his bride. Oh! could I have known before the irrevocable knot was tied, that which I learned only too soon after that fatal day, I should have escaped at least the keen remorse that has added its venom to the bitter fountains that has ever since bathed my bosom. I had been only a few weeks married; the bridal festivities had hardly passed away, when, as I was rummaging an old secretary, my eye fell on a letter, the superscription of which arrested my attention. It was from the lord of my heart. It was received during my illness, and my father, after reading it, and resolving to keep it from my knowledge, threw it carelessly aside. It breathed the most ardent love, the most unwavering constancy. He besought me to remain true to him a little while, until he could confront his accusers with unanswerable evidence, and claim me triumphantly of my punctilious father. He concluded with a solemn assurance, that he would never love or marry another, and besought of me an immediate answer, saying, that if he received it not in ten days, he should embark for the Indies, beneath the pestilential climate of which his broken heart would probably soon find rest. Oh! my friend, is there any balm for a heart lacerated like mine? The world deems me happy, and truly I possess a large share of its treasures and its baubles. My husband—I shudder as I speak that word—is all that I could desire a man to be; yet this eternal canker in my heart robs me of repose and peace."

Long did the pensive friends mingle their tears and sighs. At length Mrs. Howard, after essaying all her powers of consolation, until Mrs. Sinclair became somewhat calm,

proposed to imitate her by recounting her own sorrows.

"My history," she said, "is very similar in its opening to yours. I, too, am a rich man's daughter and delicately educated. I, too, was fascinated by a dazzling stranger, of whose address my father in his wisdom disapproved. But I had been spoiled by indulgence; I would not listen to parental advice. My lover was all perfection in my opinion, and so ardent was his worship, that I felt as if his life depended on my love. How could I treat him with cruelty? with what words could I answer the sophistry of love, while my own heart echoed every syllable? My parents remained inexorable. Oh! I had a dear good mother, who loved me as mothers only love. She plead with me to tear that new-pledged love from my bosom; she assured me that its object was unworthy, and I accused her of cruelty and malevolence, and told her plainly that I considered my lover my *best* friend. She clasped her hands and wept bitterly. Those tears! Oh! they lie like fire coals on my heart, although at the time I felt them not. Well, I consented to a clandestine union;—but as the day approached in which I had promised to fly with my beloved, I felt agony indescribable. To leave the home in which I had dwelt from infancy—to forsake my ever kind and indulgent parents—to leave behind me all my girlhood's treasures, was a severe trial; yet I did not once doubt the love and constancy of my lover, who assured me that my father would soon forgive, and receive us into favor. He did not know him as well as I did, or he would not have hoped a speedy pardon. The hour arrived. I made a pretence to go out a few hours. When I was dressed I lingered in my chamber, I felt an invisible power withholding me from my purpose.—The clock struck. I knew that he awaited me; I crossed the hall hurriedly. Mother sat in the parlor; 'you will be back to dinner?' she asked. 'Yes, ma'm; good morning,' I faltered, and my father's doors closed upon me forever. I found my lover waiting at the place of rendezvous. With gentle chidings for my tears, mingled with his thanks and exultation, he placed me in his carriage and we set forward. We were united. He placed me in elegant lodgings, until his house should be ready for our reception; he was very kind and attentive; but I knew no peace, no moment of unalloyed happiness. I was soon convinced that I should have been happier with my parents without him, than with him without my parents. It is sufficiently afflictive to forsake all the sweet tender sympathies of home, when we carry with us the paternal blessing; but to go as I did, to throw all aside for the love of a

stranger. Oh! 'the way of transgressors is hard!' I was ill. Where was my anxious mother with her ceaseless cares and blessed soothing? My husband had me well attended, but those who nursed me loved me not, and there was no balm in their ministrations. He was out all day attending to his business, which he said was imperious; and although he inquired fondly of my state when he came home, I felt that there is no love like a mother's. I wrote to my parents immediately after my elopement, and looked with great anxiety for the letter which should recall me to their arms. After several weeks had elapsed, my husband brought a large packet from the post-office. My heart paused as I took it. I knew that it was not the heart-warm message of pardon and peace. My husband was anxious to know what it contained, or I do not know how long it might have remained sealed. Its contents were a letter from my mother, penned in the agony of a bereaved heart, yet breathing pardon and warm wishes for my happiness, with much advice for my conduct in my new station, and an everlasting farewell. My father wrote coldly and haughtily; enclosed one thousand dollars, assuring me that I should never receive another cent, another letter, or any notice whatever from him. Notwithstanding the depth of my affliction, I could not but observe that my husband expressed more chagrin than sorrow. I sought to soothe the bitterness which he evidently felt against my father, when he angrily rebuked me, thus adding to the measure of my misery. As soon as I was sufficiently recovered from the shock to sit up, he told me that since I was an outcast I must be content with a more humble lodging. 'Merciful God!' I cried, 'what annunciation comes next?' 'Why,' he continued, 'you may as well know it all at once. The gentleman who possesses the treasure of your heart and hand is a poor peniless being, living by his wits, which, by the way, have led him into one bad speculation.' I sunk, not so much under the horror of the disclosure, as the taunting heartlessness of his words. A brain fever seized me, and when I recovered to consciousness, I found myself a tenant of a little hut in the suburbs of the city, attended by a dirty creature, whose low conversation shocked me exceedingly. I inquired for my husband, and was told that he would be home by midnight. He came, however, by nine o'clock; seemed really pleased to see me better, and sat by me until morning. Desolate and miserable as I was, I felt to bless him for the kind words that fell from his tongue; and having no other rest my heart clung to him closer than ever. I need not dwell on every incident of my wretched life. I soon learned that my husband

was a gambler; and when I thought to secure the little sum sent me by my father, I found it gone, together with my purse and every article of jewelry that had been mine, even to my mother's miniature. But I was getting accustomed to misery in all its forms. I only clasped my hands and sighed. I never spoke to him about it, nor did he ever refer to the subject. As soon as I could be up he told me that I must learn to wait upon myself now, for he could not afford to keep a servant. Then came my trials. I knew nothing of housekeeping. I was obliged to ask information and assistance of my poor neighbors, who, as I soon learned, shrank from my society, under the impression that I was not an honest married woman, as they expressed it. Was I not humbled then? I, the proud, the delicate, the classically educated, obliged to solicit instruction and assistance, and even to ask the names of kitchen utensils, and the common terms of housewifery, of the low and ignorant, while they shrank from an intimacy with me, as from a hideous contagion. Oh, I was miserable then. At length my husband told me that I must write to my parents, and solicit pecuniary aid. This I absolutely refused to do. Then the demon of his nature revealed itself. Such scenes as then transpired! their shadows even now are hideous to me. At length he added to all the injuries which he had heaped upon me in return for my love and confidence, by deserting me utterly. Then in my helplessness I wrote to my mother; I told her all that had befallen me, and entreated her to write me one word of consolation, and tell me what I should do. Two weeks elapsed and then I received another packet, directed in my father's hand, enclosing another one thousand dollars, and a letter from my mother. Dear Mrs. Sinclair, judge my agony as I read my father's letter. He said he trusted that I had learned the certainty of the sentence which he once read to me out of the Holy Book, "He that forsaketh his father is cursed of God." He forgave me, however, from his heart, although my heartless desertion had hurried my mother to the grave. She died three months after my elopement, leaving the enclosed letter, which I should have received immediately could my residence have been discovered. He advised me to purchase myself a humble home, and commence school teaching, or some other business by which I might gain a livelihood; said, if I behaved with prudence, he would some day make me another remittance; bade me write to him when I was settled, and concluded by saying that he had a second wife, and a lovely infant son. I sat stupidly the whole day, with the papers in my lap. I was bewildered, dumb with grief and astonishment. It was

not until the second day that I could fully acquit my father of injustice, or summon resolution to read my mother's farewell lines. You may judge how she addressed the dear fugitive who would see her face on earth no more. She had also enclosed a large sum of money, for which, she said, she had no further use. As soon as possible, I purchased this pleasant cottage, and its lovely fields and orchards. An intelligent young man farms my land, and I live at my ease. I wrote to my father in the spirit of filial humility and love, and his stern heart so far relented that he invited me to visit him as a daughter. I have been to his house; I have shaken hands with my step-mother, who is an excellent woman, and taught her sweet little boy to regard me as a loving sister. But, dear madam, nature did not teach me this. I had found affliction profitable to me, for it had taught me the spirit of meekness. I trust that I have learned where true happiness lies, even in the possession of the religion of Jesus. Love is an *ignus fatuus*; it sometimes leads to flowery vales, but more frequently to thorny deserts and dark morasses. Unless we keep our eyes on the divine light of revelation, we may be lost. No earthly idol can defend us in life, or console us in the hour of death. If we fix our supreme affections on a summer flower, must they not inevitably agonize over a broken blighted wreck?"

"And have you heard nothing from Mr. Howard since he deserted you?" inquired Mrs. Sinclair.

"Howard is not my husband's name. Ellen Howard is my christian name. After my degradation, I renounced my husband's name, neither did I dare assume the name of my father. My husband's name is Medway—Frederick Mortimer Medway."

"Mighty God! Is it possible! O, Lord have mercy——" exclaimed Mrs. Sinclair wildly. "Frederick Mortimer Medway was the name of him who won my young affections, for whom I have wept so many weary years. Merciful Providence! from what a vortex hast thou rescued me! How madly did I struggle to throw myself off the fearful precipice of ruin. Dear Mrs. Howard, I shall love you forever; but let that which I this day confided to you rest in eternal oblivion. I am ashamed of my folly."

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Sinclair was sitting listlessly in his library; now gazing at the valuable and splendid arrangements of the room, then at the enchanting prospect of garden, field, and grove, which the high-arched windows commanded; at length he clasped his hands upon the table and laid his forehead on them with a deep sigh.

"All these would I freely resign," he mur-

mured, "to be assured that I possess the undivided heart of my beautiful wife. I can reproach her with no one fault, and yet there is a coldness and reserve in her manner that effectually prevents the mingling of our hearts."

At that moment Mrs. Sinclair entered. With a sweet smile she approached and threw her arms confidently around his neck—

"I have come," she said, lovingly, "to proffer you the moiety of my heart which I have heretofore withheld from you."

He clasped her to his heart with joyful surprise, and she told him unreservedly the story of her first love, and the disclosure made by Mrs. Howard.

"Now," she said, in conclusion, "the delusion is dispelled, and I fly heart and soul to your bosom."

Mr. and Mrs. Sinclair are now in reality happy; and she often laughingly tells to pinning young ladies, the story of her *Disappointment of the Heart!*

—

## DREAMS OF THE LAND AND SEA.

BY DR. REYNELL COATES.

## INTRODUCTORY.

"'Tis all but a dream at the best!"

DREAMS of the Land and Sea! Why should I style them dreams? They are pictures of actual scenes, though some of them relate to events removed far back in the dimness of years, and the touches of the brush have felt the mellowing influence of time.

While striving to avoid whatever is irrelevant or out of keeping, I have not endeavored to confine myself, in these sketches, within the limits of simple narrative, but have ventured occasionally to mingle facts with speculations on their causes, or to follow their consequences to probable results: nor have I totally discarded the imagination—although the scenes are invariably drawn from nature, and the principal personages are real characters—the accessory actors only are sometimes creatures of the brain. In many of the descriptions, the reader will perceive the evidences of a desire to place in prominent relief the works of nature and her God, while art, and all its vanities, is made to play a subordinate part; for nothing can be more impertinently obtrusive than the pigmy efforts of the ambitious, struggling for distinction by attempting either to mar or to perfect the plans of the Great Architect of Creation, or carve a name upon the columns of his temple.

Yet such is the social disposition of man, that no scene, however grand or beautiful, can awaken pleasurable emotion unless it is linked directly with humanity. There is deep oppression in the sense of total loneliness,—and few can bear the burden calmly, even for an hour! A solitary foot-print in the desert,—a broken oar upon the shelterless beach,—the tinkling of a cow-bell in the depth of the forest,—the crowing of the cock heard far off in the valley as we sink exhausted on the mountain side when the gloom of night settles heavily down upon our path-way,—who that has been a wanderer has not felt the heart-cheering effect of accidents like these! They tell us that, though our solitude be profound, there is sympathy near us, *or there has been recently.*

In deference, then, to this universal feeling, I have selected for these articles such sketches only as are interwoven with enough of human life to awaken social interest, even while grappling with the tempest—riding the ocean wave, or watching the moon-

beams as they struggle through the foliage of scarce trodden forests, and fall half quenched, upon the withered leaves below.

But why should I style them dreams? There are many valid reasons. To the writer, the past is all a dream! But of this the world knows nothing, nor would it care to know. The scenes described are distant, and distance itself is dreamy! What can be more like the color of a dream than yon long range of mountains fading into the sky behind its veil of mist!

Let us ascend this lofty peak! 'Tis sunset! Cast your glance westward, where

"————— Parting day  
Dies like the Dolphin ———."

The sun slowly retires behind the far off hills. Inch after inch, the shadows climb the summit where you stand. He is gone!—yet you are not in darkness! His beams, which reach you not, still gild the motionless clouds, and these emblems of obscurity reflect on you the memory of his glory:—and, oh! how exquisitely pencilled in the clear obscure stands forth yon range, clad with towering trees, where each particular branch, and almost every leaf, seems separately portrayed against the paling sky,—*miraculously near!*

This is a vision of the *past*. Its strength is owing to the depth of shade,—not to the intensity of light:—for, when the sun at noon-day, poured its full tide of rays upon the scene, the sky was brighter, and rock and river glistened back the flashing beams until the eye was pained:—but where were then those lines of beauty? The details were distinct. Then you might gaze on the forest in its reality, and could almost penetrate its secret paths, despite their dark green canopy!—but where were the broad effect, the bold, sweeping outlines that now give unity and grandeur to the fading scene? The *soul* of creation is before you—more palpable than *its mere* corporeal elements are hid from sight. It resembles the master-piece of some great artist whose pencil portrays, in simple light and shade, a noble picture. All there is *life!* Those countenances!—those various attitudes are *speaking!* The shrubbery waves in the wind, and over the tremulous waters of that lovely lake, the very song of yonder mountain maid seems floating *upon the canvass*. Do you not hear the music? 'Tis but a dream of boyhood! Approach

the painting! There is no *real* outline, there! The brush has been rudely dashed athwart the piece surcharged with heavy colors. Masses of many hues roughen the surface, and all is meaningless confusion.

Stand back a-pace! Again the cottage, lake and mountain start from the surface, *truer than truth itself*.

Panting with sighs and toil, man reaches by painful steps, the mid-land height of life, as we have climbed this summit, and when fainting by the way, it has been *his* resource, as *ours*, to cast himself upon the bosom of his "mother," earth\*—look back and *dream*! We have no other mother now! But when you nestled to a parent's breast, and felt the present impress of her love, knew you its breadth and depth as this vision shows it?

Memory is like the painter or the sun-set—its images appear more real than the substantial things they picture, and glow the richer as the gloom of oblivion gathers around them.

Turn your eyes eastward! Night sits upon the landscape. No ray of the past illuminates it. The very elevation on which you stand increases the darkness with its shadow, while it widens your distance from every object vaguely and fearfully looming through the evening mist.

This is a vision of the *future*. That height of land which seems to reach the clouds, upon whose dusky flank the overawed imagination figures cave and precipice, torrent and cataract, is but a gentle slope, with just enough of rudeness to render still more beautiful by contrast, the village spire, the moss-roofed mill, the waving grain that crowns its very top. Such it is seen by day.

Thus, when, in middle life, man peers into the future, what frightful shadows haunt him. Coming events magnified to giants by the obscurity around, stalk menacingly forward. Danger threatens him at every step, and there is naught beyond but that black back-ground—*Death*! The heavens shed no light upon the future. He is descending the hill of life, and their glories are fading behind him. He strives to borrow from the past a gleam to guide him onward, but in vain! Too often his own ambition has prompted him to choose the lofty path that now condemns him to redoubled darkness. Yet, although these spectres of the gloom are most frequently mere creatures of the brain, which day-light would dispel, they govern his career and cover him with dread. The *dream* is *truth* to him—and it is only *truth itself* that he esteems a *dream*! Why can he not wait for sun-rise! Then should he see even the grave overhung with the verdure of spring, and death arrayed in all the glory of a morn of promise!

\* When the celebrated Indian Chief, Tecumseh entered a Council Chamber of the whites, where the officers, already seated, thoughtlessly allowed him to remain standing, his countenance in gathering gloom, betrayed the consciousness of the slight, which *savage* courtesy would not have suffered to occur. The look aroused attention, and a chair was handed him—but his proud lip curled. He threw himself upon the ground, exclaiming—"Tecumseh will repose on the bosom of his mother!"

There is reality in dreams!—Come, then, and let us dream together!—our visions may be dark sometimes, but we will not forget that the sun will rise on the morrow.

#### A SERMON BY A MARMOT—OR THE EXILE OF CONNECTICUT.

"But come thy ways!—we 'll go along together;  
And ere we have thy youthful wages spent,  
We 'll light upon some settled, low content."

*As You Like It*

EVERY subject of observation presents itself under a variety of aspects, regulated, not only by the situation of the observer, but by his moral peculiarities also. The little animal whose name dignifies the caption of this article, though it may be better known to many of my readers by the title of ground-hog, or wood-chuck, is usually regarded as a terror, or a pest, to the farmer. Contributing in no appreciable degree to the comfort or advantage of man, and seemingly created solely for the purpose of digging unsightly holes in the ground, eating corn, and diffusing an odour by no means agreeable; it is commonly hated or despised, according to the profession of those who honor it with notice. But nothing that springs from creative wisdom is a proper subject for contempt, and good may be derived, in many instances, from the most unpromising sources, by those who devote themselves to the study of nature. Among the tribes of animals that seem to have least connection with man and his interests, there are many whose habits may teach us more effective lessons than we often derive from the homilies of more pretending instructors.

The individual wood-chuck, here introduced to the reader, was more fortunate than most of his species, for he had succeeded in winning the affections of a worthy agriculturalist, in whose family he was regularly domiciliated during the months of his activity, (for the Marmot is a hybernating animal,) and he reciprocated the attachment of his human protectors with a gratitude apparently as warm as that of any other quadruped familiar of the kitchen.

The late distinguished philanthropist, Mr. Anthony Benezette, extended his benevolence to every thing possessing life that came within the sphere of his influence, and he regularly fed the rats in his cellar, until he attracted a colony of these predatory vermin, by no means agreeable to the taste or interest of his next-door neighbor. When the latter at last endeavored to eradicate the nuisance by regularly shooting every adventurous member of the murine fraternity that ventured upon his premises. Mr. B., with tears in his eyes, protested against this murderous proceeding, "Don't shoot the poor innocent creatures!" he said. "If thou wilt only feed them regularly every day, as I do, they'll never do thee any harm." Whether a similar policy had been the origin of the kindness shown our little friend, the Marmot, I know not, but he had the felicity to be born in a land where corn is cheap, and society difficult of access, and he probably owed his protection to a masculine edition of the feeling that so fre-

quently promotes the happiness of a poodle or a parrot.

His guardian moved in a humble sphere, and most travellers might have passed the brute and his human associates alike unnoticed: but I propose to employ him as a hook, on which to hang the observations and reflections of a day in the woods, and a night in the log-cabin. It is a slender theme at best, and if discretion be the test of wisdom, I know not but our Marmot displays as high a grade of intellectual endowment as any of the other actors in the tale.

One of these was an eastern merchant, who had purchased some thousands of acres of land—wild, lonely, and far removed from practicable roads or navigable streams.—He had purchased it in utter ignorance of its resources, and was then upon his way to give it an inspection.

The next was the narrator—recently appointed to a chair in a Collegiate Institution, almost embosomed in the wilderness. He had accepted the station in a moment of depression, all uninformed of the condition of the country where it *flourished*, and had just arrived to *blush* beneath the honors of the professional gown in halls that rejoiced in a faculty—*lucus a non lucendo!*—of three persons, and wanted but a library, an apparatus, influence, and a class, to render it an honor to the state that chartered it!

The third was a thriving specimen of the sturdy woodsman and pains-taking farmer of the border—the intermediate step between the adventurous pioneer and the established settler. He had emigrated from the beautiful valley of the Connecticut—a valley where nature has done so much and man so little! to seek a more promising asylum west of the Alleghany Mountains, and he carried all his fortune with him. A young and lovely wife followed his footsteps from town to town—from wilderness to wilderness.—An axe was on his shoulder, two hundred dollars in his pocket, and he possessed much of that shrewdness which ordinarily passes current for talent.

He was moderate in his desires, and *only took up three hundred acres to begin with*; choosing a location where a rude and cellarless hut of logs graced one angle of the plot of ground,—its site selected because a spring and streamlet there supplied the most important necessary of life—good water.

Four acres of unfenced clearing marked the progress of his less prosperous predecessor in taming the primeval forest. Alas! The want of capital!—Two years of bootless labor on the part of that predecessor, left the ground encumbered still with girdled timber. The long and naked limbs of many a stately tree—all sapless now—stood pale and inflexible in the summer gale—a monument of desolation. Some rough, irregular furrows,—ploughed with borrowed oxen, and ornamented with the vine of an occasional refuse potatoe creeping through the starting briars and brush-wood,—alone gave evidence of human industry; for the wilderness was rapidly reclaiming its own.

There was a half-burnt brand on the deserted hearth within the hovel; but the blasts that entered

freely through the intervals between the logs,—from which, mass by mass, the clay was falling;—had scattered the ashes widely over the room. A rusty tin basin on the floor, and a broken axe-helve lying athwart the doorless lintel, completed the household inventory. The ground had reverted to the noble and wealthy company from whom it was originally purchased—their funds enriched by the payment of the first instalment, and the value of the *improvements* added to their property.—But where is the former owner? Probably renewing the same improvident game in the wilds of Michigan or Wisconsin.

Such was the home to which our adventurous representative of the land of steady habits had introduced his amiable and delicate wife, four years before the time of our journey.

The station enjoyed many advantages. Civilization was slowly tending thitherward, and every year enhanced the nominal, if not the real value of the land. Moreover, there were many neighbors to break the tedium of life in the wilds. Nine miles to the westward—that being the direction of the older settlements,—there lived a veteran of two wars, whose pension made him rich in a country where a dollar is a rarity, and trade is carried on exclusively by barter. He was the most important man within the circuit of twenty miles; for he owned the only forge. Not even the influence of Squire Tomkins, whose aristocratical residence, five miles deeper in the forest, was furnished with the luxury of weatherboarding, and flanked by a regular barn and stables, could outweigh, *in public opinion*, the claims of one whose labors contributed so essentially to the every-day comfort of life, if not to its preservation, in the rude contest between the settler and nature. Public opinion did I say?—Why! besides these three high personages and their families, a migratory trapper and bee-hunter on the one hand, and a half-cast Indian basket-maker on the other, *there was no public*; yet here was found not only public opinion, but party feeling also—politics and sectarianism!—And where did ever society exist without them? But it is time to commence our journey.

One morning, during the autumn of 1823, I strolled into the principal store of the beautiful little village of —, in Western Pennsylvania, to exchange the latest paper from the American Athens, for another daily sheet from the Commercial Emporium. An old friend, Mr. W—, of Philadelphia, entered at about the same time, with a map of the surrounding counties, to enquire the road to certain tracts of land but recently conveyed to him. A tall man, who had seen some forty summers, but whose keen dark eye, such as you can only find in the wilderness, seemed to have gathered a smouldering fire, beneath the shadow of the forest leaves, which few would wish to wake, stepped forward to give the required information. Rude shoes, unstockinged feet, coarse woollen pantaloons, and a hunting shirt, composed his whole attire:—A rifle, with a richly chased silver breeching, swinging athwart his back, raised him above the ordinary hunter in the curious scale of conventional rank that men acknowledge in obedi-

ence to their nature, even in the heart of unfrequented woods; but the cart-whip in his right hand, and a basket of eggs hanging upon the left arm seemed irrelevant to his other accoutrements. A finely chiseled nose, verging on the Roman character, and a strong habitual compression of the jaws, marked great decision, firmness, and desperate daring—while his manly tread, in which the foot seemed to cling for a moment to the surface and as instantly rose upon the toe with a slow, but elastic and graceful motion, seemed better fitted to follow the mountain-side, or the torrent's track, than the dull routine of the furrow. His traits and carriage, thus mingled and contrasted, would have proved a puzzle to the keenest judges of human nature,—the bar-keeper of a hotel, or the agent of a rail-road—but his origin was still distinctly marked, notwithstanding his change of residence and habits, in the somewhat sharpened expression of the face, the narrowness of the external angle of the eye, the covert curl of the lip, and the faintest perceptible elevation of the corresponding corner of the mouth. He was the Connecticut farmer of our story, on whose original stock of character four years of close communion with bears and deer, had engrafted a *twig* of that which graces the western hunter.

A few adroitly managed questions placed him immediately in possession of the residence, the destination, views and purposes of my friend, the merchant; and, in terms of courtesy, conveyed in phrase more polished than one would anticipate from his attire, he tendered his services as a guide, and the best his house afforded by the way, as host,—extending the invitation most politely to myself.

Having long been anxious to observe what charm in domestic life upon the borders, could so fascinate mankind as to impel such crowds of restless adventurers annually to plunge into the gloomy forest, there to remain socially buried for years, until the growth of settled population again environs them; I immediately ordered horse, and mounting with my Athenian friend, followed, or accompanied the light wagon of the settler, as the road or path permitted.

We had made but ten miles of progress, when the farms by the way-side began to appear few and far between. Around us, gathered, deep and more deeply still, the shadows of tall trees, which interlocked their arms above us, until mysterious twilight was substituted for the bright sunshine that made its existence known at intervals through openings in the foliage. These were met with only where some giant of the wilderness had laid him down in his last repose, when the slowly gnawing tooth of time had sapped his moss-grown trunk. Occasionally, the wagon jolted heavily over fallen trees, where the lightning had riven or the gale uprooted them. It seemed a sacrilege to disturb the dread repose of nature with our idle voices; and for miles we rode in total silence.—How startling, then, and how incongruous to our ears was the lively voice of our guide, exclaiming, as we passed a *blaze*, “we shall soon be *home* now!” Home! and here!—I gazed around on every hand. Over the tops of the low shrubbery

the eye was carried along interminable aisles of stately trees! Interminable arches rested on their summits! An awful unity of gloom engulfed us!

“High mountains are with me a feeling,”

And no man has rioted more wildly in scenes of solitude and desolation. My shoulder is familiar with the rifle, my feet with cliff and precipice, and my arms with the torrent and breaker.—Nay! more than this! I have stood alone in cities! The limitless current of life has whirled and eddied by, and I have felt no fellowship!—have felt the sternest check of all that linked me with my kind, and buried myself in egoism! “There runs not a drop of the blood of Logan in the veins of any living creature.”

But never yet came over me the thought of *home* with such a thrilling shudder as when the word was spoken in those close and soul-oppressing woods! There was no resonance from the leafy ground—no echo from those long drawn gothic passages! The sound fell flat upon the ear, and its very cheerfulness of tone, deadened by the dark and inelastic leaves, resembled the convulsive laugh of terror or of pain!

Man is moulded for the contest. There is rapture in the strife, be it with physical or moral evils—a glory in the conquest, that repays the suffering! If vanquished,—he may fly and bide his time! If crushed,—he falls back upon his self-esteem, enfolds his robe around him, and dies, like Cæsar—bravely! Abroad—in calm or storm, in sun-shine or in tempest—man feels himself the ruler, and his pride supports him in the worst of woes; but *at home*—he is dependent! There woman rules the emotions!—Who ever knew a joy beside a gloomy hearth! Or when the wearing cares of life, or the oppression of habitual solitude has furrowed the fore-head, and fixed the features of the wife, what husband ever smiled again as once he smiled!

But away! Our path is onward!—soon we passed along the margin of a precipitate descent, and the day burst in upon us, presenting a momentary view of a long range of hills, over which the fire had swept in the preceding year. Brown furze and blackened masses of charcoal covered the slope for miles, with here and there a waving line of foliage climbing the ascent, wherever some highland rivulet had checked the progress of the flames, and preserved the grass. I had thought that Nature furnished no more spectral object than a girdled tree in a barren clearing; but the tall gnarled trunks, with charred and stunted limbs, that sentineled that ruined hill-side were more spectral still!

Descending the hill, the forest again closed around us: but presently we entered the track of a tornado—a wind-fall. It had traversed a forest of pines—and, for about two hundred yards in width, had made a passage through the woods, as straight and regular as art could have rendered it. On either hand—far as the eye could reach—arose the unbroken wall of verdure, a hundred feet in height, while in the midst, the vision stretched away over an almost level carpet of scrub-oak and whortleberries, forming



a vista of unparalleled beauty; one which would have graced the palace-grounds of an emperor. Not a stump, a root, or tree was visible in all the range of sight. "God made this clearing," I remarked. The charm of silence was broken by the comment, and the conversation immediately became general.

We had ridden about three miles farther, when the road, if road it could be called, forked suddenly; and, turning to the left, we found ourselves in front of the cottage of our host. It deserved this title richly; for never, in my many journeys beyond the margin of a regular American forest, have I seen more neatness and propriety, than was here displayed in all the accidents of a residence of logs. True! there were none of those vines and graceful shrubs that beautify the grounds around a thrifty cottage in New England; but, even here, a garden was attempted. The building, two stories in height, stood near the summit of an acclivity which formed a sort of irregular lawn, and was actually shaded by two stately trees!—the only instance of such preservation I have witnessed in the wilds of Pennsylvania.

On the right, at a decent distance from the house, were a stable with a loft, and several stacks of hay; and on the left, a natural meadow, of some ten or fifteen acres, had been cleared of brush and sedge, and furnished ample pasturage for four handsome cows. This, with twelve acres of upland, formed the extent of the clearing. Several sugar maples were scattered about the lawn, and a few young fruit trees ornamented the arable land behind the house.

Here, then, was comfort—almost the aristocracy of the woods! We drove rapidly to the door, but the sound of wheels had already drawn the family without the house. The wife, a pale and delicate woman, about twenty-eight or thirty years of age, held in one hand, a bare-foot boy of three; while a little girl, still younger, folded herself in the skirt of her mother's woollen frock—her snow-white head, and light-blue eye peeping out fearfully from her concealment, as we dismounted. A stout lad, employed by the farmer, took charge of our horses, and we were presented to our hostess.

"We have but poor accommodations to offer the gentlemen, John! but they are welcome to what we have, such as they are. You are the first strangers from the old settlements I have seen since we came to this clearing! Were you ever in Connecticut?" Anxiety and hope were most plainly depicted in the care-worn face of the speaker. I could not bear to reply in the negative, and evaded the question by noticing the children as we entered the house. Here, my companion was surprised at the progress that had been made in four short years by the labor of a settler of such slender means. Six decent chairs and a cherry-wood table ornamented the apartment—a well-made dough-trough, with a wide and smoothly planed top, served the purpose of a side-board—a large cup-board, with curious, home-made wooden locks and hinges, occupied one corner, and a rude settee contained, beneath the seat, a tool-chest and a receptacle for table-linen. The ample fire-place, with

its wooden chimney, was festooned with strings of venison, hung up to smoke in pieces, and the roughly plastered wall was ornamented with two rude engravings, in *domestic* frames—Adam and Eve driven from Paradise, and the victory of Lake Erie. To these was added a printed copy of the Declaration of Independence. A Bible stood open upon the table when we entered, and a prayer-book, Young's Night Thoughts, The Lady of the Lake, and a few torn old numbers of a monthly magazine, adorned a shelf above the fire. We missed the usual utensils of the cuisine, but these we afterwards discovered in a more fitting place. The universal ticking of the wooden clock was heard; but whence it came, we knew not, until the hour for retiring. It stood upon the stairway.

Hanging his rifle and powder-flask on the wooden hooks, depending, according to custom, from a beam, our host remarked that we were dusty with travel.

"Tin is scarce with us here, gentlemen! and crockery is brittle," said he; "so if you wish to wash your hands and faces, and will pardon our wild ways, follow me to the cellar, and you shall be accommodated!"

Taking a course but clean towel from the chest in the settee, he opened a door beneath the stairs, and descended; leading the way on this singular excursion. A cellar is a luxury in the simple cabin; but here we were provided with an apartment more complete, in its conveniencies, than those of older countries: the floor being well levelled, and the walls faced with stones of ample size. The settler had formed, in one corner, a large cavity about three feet deep. This was lined with mortar, and paved with smooth, round pebbles from the brook. A tunnel, with a wooden trunk and sliding flood-gate, about four inches square, led from the bottom of this basin, through the foundations of the wall, to the bed of a rivulet at some distance on the lawn. The greater part of the waters of a spring, which rose very near the house and fed this runnel, being diverted from their original course, were conveyed through hollow logs, cleaned out and smoothed by burning, through the wall of the cellar, about four feet above the floor, and fell in a beautiful cascade into the basin below. But our host was far too fertile in resources to permit the whole of the current to take this direction. A well made milk-trough, constructed of timbers, some of which betrayed more intimate acquaintance with the axe than the plane, occupied nearly the whole remaining portion of that side of the cellar which corresponded with the earthen basin. It was supplied with water by means of a small canal composed of pieces of bark suspended from the beams above, and capable of being projected into the cascade, so as to receive any desirable portion of the falling fluid. Another tunnel, communicating with the first, carried off the surplus. As we viewed these curious results of Yankee ingenuity and perseverance, several fine speckled trout were seen disporting among pans or crocks of the richest milk and cream, into which, we were informed, they sometimes leaped, to the no small discomfort of the

tidy house-wife, when in their hide-and-whoop gambols, their daring over-acted their discretion. Here, then, we found, combined by the most simple means, the luxury of the washing-room, the drain, the bath, and the milk-house. Nor was this all! The waters of a spring, when flowing *pleno rivo*, never freeze. They carry with them, for a time, the heat which is the expression of the mean temperature of the earth, and share it with surrounding objects. The very stream, that thus contributed to his domestic comforts, and, as we afterwards discovered, rendered, in its excess, services equally important to his cattle in the farm-yard, preserved his stock of necessities from the effects of frost, and contributed to lessen the exertions required to procure fuel for the long and dreary winter. These arrangements rendered our host still more an object of curiosity and interest—for seldom had we seen such striking evidences of philosophical deduction in house-hold affairs:—and we could not avoid the hope, that the permanent enjoyment and gradual increase of the comforts created by his genius, might be his ultimate reward. But, alas! the prevalent disposition of his tribe, when once removed from home, is—roving! Never contented with the *status quo*—or satisfied with possession; they leave the enjoyment of ease for the hope of wealth, and are ever ready to sacrifice reality for a dream. Yet, it was not for us to censure our host severely, should he ultimately pursue the course so admirably described in one short technicality of the American woods-man—“*Flitting!*” Had we not both been *flitting* ourselves!—the one for honor, and the other for gold! My gown and my friend’s land were of *equal value*, and both had been purchased at the expense of solid sacrifices; but little does it concern us now, that the progress of population has thrown the former over shoulders well clad in broad-cloth, bought with the surplus of a decent salary, or that the other is studded with profitable farms! In many parts of America, twelve years form an age in human affairs, and, in western Pennsylvania, *we are of the last!*

Our ablutions completed, we returned to the sitting-room. The tea-table was spread with a tidy cloth, and a smoking pot of Liverpool ware made its appearance, replete with a beverage, *by the name of tea*; though, by the test of the olfactories, it might have been supposed some compound discovered among the ruins of the last Piquet village, in the days when the venerable Mr. Hooker first raised the standard of his faith among the ancestors of her whose hand distilled it.—Peace be with the spirit of the good old man! Long since our journey, I have gazed, as a stranger on his venerable tomb-stone in the central church-yard of Hartford, and felt at the moment,—it may be with some bitterness—that the descendants of his flock had lost but little in frankness and hospitality, by being transplanted to the wilds of the west! But *revenons ou nos moutons*.\*

\* It were ungrateful in the writer, not to acknowledge the marked courtesy and kindness received from several friends

The table was soon amply furnished with preserves, in nameless variety, formed from the wild fruits of the neighbouring woods, by the aid of maple sugar. The unvarying hard-crustied pie, sweet, well-baked corn-bread, and the constant attendant of the lighter meals in New England, the fried potatoe, completed the repast. We were seated, and—after a well-spoken grace—a service which the really respectable exile of Connecticut rarely neglects in any of the changing scenes of life—we did it ample justice.

Economy of light is a matter of serious importance in the log-cabin; and after tea, we gathered round the blazing hearth, (for the autumnal nights were beginning to be cool,) adding, occasionally, a pine knot from a group collected in the corner of the fire-place, by way of illuminating an idea or a face, whenever the subject-matter of the discourse became peculiarly interesting.

Quick and puzzling were the questions with which our hostess plied us, on all things relating to the “old settlements,” as she already styled the sea-board;—for the language and habits of the “far west,” are still strangely preserved in these mid-land wildernesses, over which the genius of civilization has bounded, to wave his omnipotent wand over the regions of the setting sun, like the last of the mammoths when he disappeared from the banded hunters of the olden time.

For a while, something like the liveliness of earlier days, stole over the features of the querist, which were fast settling into the habitual gloom, that gives character to the physiognomy of the recluse and the blind. But whatever direction might be given to the discourse, in a few moments it was sure to centre in Connecticut; until, evasion proving impracticable, we were compelled, reluctantly, to confess that our travels had never extended northward or eastward of the Housatonic—the American Tweed.—A deep sigh succeeded this announcement, and our hostess drew back her chair within the shadow of—what shall I call it?—*jams*, properly so styled, the fire-place had none! Its sides were formed of short, projecting logs, about three feet in length, piled, one above another, interlocking, by deep notches, with those which formed the walls of the building, at one end, and at the other, secured by short cross-sections of a smaller tree, similarly notched, set thwartwise between their projecting extremities, and bolted with strong wooden pins. This structure supported the ample chimney, which was constructed in like manner, and shared with it the usual protection against fire, a thick internal coat of clay, admixed with a very little lime. These chimney sides formed deep

during a short residence at Hartford, and if tempted to speak a little severely of the manners of the place, there is much more pleasure in the thought, that a town, honored by the residence of Mrs. Sigourney, Mr. Wordsworth, the liberal patron of the *fine arts*, and the model of *fine feeling*, and Rev. Mr. Gualladet, the devoted philanthropist, can endure some censure upon its general hospitality. On a more suitable occasion, I should be most happy to extend this list, partly, because it would be no more than just to do so,

“And partly that bright names will hallow song!”

recesses on either hand, in one of which, the cupboard was accommodated, while the other was graced by the dining-table.

Near to one of these shaded recesses, our hostess drew her chair, and left the conversation, for a long time, to her husband.

He inquired, with an interest, seemingly as intense as a statesman, into the politics of the East, with the tenor of which he had contrived to keep pace astonishingly, when his isolated position is considered. I was curious to know how he managed to obtain such accurate information as to men and measures at the seat of government, in the midst of so many obstacles and such untiring agricultural efforts as his rapid improvements must have demanded. His reply furnished a melancholy proof of the natural disputatiousness of our species, while it illustrated the pertinacity with which a mind, once awakened to party feelings, will cling to its old friendships and antipathies when all interests in the result have ceased.

"Why," said he, "for a while it was easy enough; for the Post rides through here once a week, and leaves a New York paper to Squire Tomkins—so the winter I first came to these clearings, I used to walk over to read the paper every other Saturday afternoon, except when the snow was too deep, and came back on Sunday after dinner—so I learned what was going on pretty well. And sometimes one or other of the old blacksmith's boys—that's his grand-children!—for his two sons have gone off to Illinois—would come over of odd Saturdays, a horse-back—for the old soldier kept a horse—he's been many years in these parts, and has cleared and sold three farms, before he fixed where he is—and he'd take up Mary behind him, and ride over to the squire's—for one of us had to stay and tend the cow and feed the pigs; so we could not both go together—and bring her back again the next day.—And a great treat it was to Mary!—for sometimes she would see something in the paper about Connecticut.—She used to teach school in Connecticut for a while.—Poor Mary! she had a better education than I had—though mine wasn't a bad one, for a common school, the way the world goes; and I used to be able to *say my say* with any body; but somehow these woods are so lonely, that I'm out of practice.

"Poor Mary! her heart's in Connecticut still, though she never tells me so,—*but she looks it sometimes*—except may-be about Thanks-giving day,—and then she can't help *saying it* too! I'm sometimes a'most sorry she ever married such a wild and wandering fellow as me."

"Why, John!"—in a tone of the tenderest ex postulation, sounded from the corner. Almost unconsciously, I threw a pine knot on the fire, and the sudden flame lighted up a countenance, which would have reassured the most desponding husband. All traces of the inanity of solitude were gone; and over the cloud of sorrow, in which early recollections had veiled the features,—even while the tears of memory were starting from the eye,—the moon-beam of unalterable love poured its silvery light, and the pride

of the wife spoke plainly in the curve of a lip already raised and trembling with affectionate reproach. The moisture lingered threateningly upon the lids, but did not fall!—It paused a moment, as in doubt, what emotion called it there, and then retreated to its source.

The husband's face was wreathed in smiles; his voice became firmer; his language lost its parenthetical confusion on the instant, and he resumed his discourse.

"Well! well! It's all my fault, if fault there be. *She* never had a fault! and she's a blessing that would pay for twenty thousand faults of mine! There, Mary! Put the little ones to bed in the loft, and hear them say their prayers." He dismissed them with a parting kiss, and when his wife retired—continued his narrative.

"The squire and I were friends, all through the winter and spring. He and his two sons, with the blacksmith's boys, and three men from the furnace ten miles down the stream, assisted me to build my house; and I borrowed a horse from the smith and a wagon in town, to bring my lime for the plastering; so, when my new house was finished, we turned the old one, that I told you of as we came along, into a right good stable. I had laid up a full supply of provisions in the old house, the fall before,—bought me a plough and some tools,—felled a good deal of valuable pine timber, and put the four acres of clearing into winter grain. With the first spring-floods, I floated the pines, by the help of the squire's oxen, and carried enough down to the saw-mill, (it's only twelve miles,) to bring me a good round sum; and then I had money enough to pay my first instalment, buy me another cow and a pair of oxen, and pay my way till harvest, without draining all the savings I brought out with me. In the winter, I had also got three acres girdled, and the meadow half cleared; for it wanted but little attention; so, as my potatoes turned out uncommon well, and every thing prospered—I bought me a horse and wagon in the fall, and saved just enough to pay the second instalment;—trusting to Providence *and the stores* for the little we should want to buy next season.

"But this is not what I was talking of—I had like to have forgot the squire!—We got along very well till June or July—when we were mowing the meadow.—Yes! it was in July.—And the squire was a churchman and a democrat, but I was a federalist and a congregationalist—I did not much mind his jokes about the pilgrim fathers, though he said the Piquets were better men than those that planted the state; and laughed at them for hanging the Quakers in Boston. For the squire was a well read man before he came to the west—and he hated Connecticut, because he came from Lancaster county, and his father was killed in a quarrel with the settlers in Wyoming, long after the troubles were over. But when he said that Jefferson was a better man than General Washington, I could not stand it, and we quarrelled. I said what no Christian should say, and what I wont repeat;—so the squire and I have never spoken since, except when poor Mary was taken

down! and then I had to speak; for there was no other woman within ten miles, and no doctor but a quack, within twenty-five. But Mrs. Tomkins is a nurse and a doctor both — God bless her!

I'm getting to be very comfortable now, for I've got every thing around me that a man can desire in the woods, except money; and I've little use for that except to pay the last instalment; but I can't bear to keep that woman so lonely and sad for want of company! The old soldier's daughter comes over to see us once a month; but that is little for one who used to have a dozen young friends always around her in Connecticut, even if she was poor. To tell the truth, though the woods are full of venison and wild turkeys, and quails and squirrels to be had for the shooting, and though Tom can catch a mess of trout in the milk trough at any time, — for he lets his line run into the tunnel and there seems to be no end to them — yet I can't help thinking that if I had laid out my three hundred dollars of her's and my savings in old Connecticut — if I had worked half as hard there as I have done here, and she had gone on teaching school, we should both have been happier and richer than we are now. So I think I shall soon pull up stakes, sell out, and go to the prairies, where God makes the clearings, as you said, on the road — and it's real hard work for a man, I can tell you!"

This last remark threw me into a reverie of no pleasing nature; and I, in turn, retreated into the shade, as the light of the pine-knot subsided and the wife reëntered. I was dreaming of the future, when, the buoyancy of early manhood being over, stubborn habit would *compel* our really worthy host after all rational motive for change should have flown! — "Thou art one of a genus," I mentally ejaculated. "The mark of the wanderer is on thy brow —

"For thus I read thy destiny,  
And cannot be mistaken."

There was much conversation afterwards; and at intervals I gleaned the strong points of his history, and that of her whose fate he now controlled. But I was busy with my dream! Peering into the far off future, I saw him in the last of his *flittings*! — deserted by those who should be the props of his age, but whose youthful fire would not permit them to remain inactive in the wilderness, after pictures of eastern wealth and luxury, clad in all the glorious hues of memory, had been rendered familiar as nursery tales by their suicidal parents. I saw him in the evening of his days — and where? — seated by his feeble and exhausted, though still affectionate partner, at the door of an ill-provided cabin, far in the north-west — Far beyond the present range of the pioneer! The gloom of night was slowly dropping its curtain around them, though the phosphorescent snow gave dim illumination to the broad and trackless expanse of the prairie — trackless then, even by the exterminated Buffalo. *There* were none even of the few conveniences of his present wood-land home; for the genius and the skill which had once enabled him to bend the stubborn gifts of nature to his will, were chilled by the frosts of age.

I could even hear the voices of future years stealing on the autumnal night breeze, as it moaned through the rough and ill-joined casement where we sat.

"Why, John, this is Thanks-giving night! Where can our oldest boy be wandering now? He was just thirty yesterday, and we have not heard from him these six years! — Not since you made your last flitting, John! He was always a good boy, and I'm sure he has written to us! John! you may depend upon it, there must be a letter in the office at St. Louis — St. Louis, was it? or was it Chicago? My memory begins to fail me so! He sent us fifty dollars the last time, when we lived in Wisconsin, away down in the States. It must have been in Chicago; for it was there he wrote before!"

"Ah! Mary! Mary! boys forget their mothers and their fathers too, when they are old and feeble! He is getting rich somewhere far over yonder, and little he thinks of us! But there's little Mary, where can she be? Her husband was just gone to New Orleans with a load of furs when the hunters went down to the bluffs in the fall, and they sent our letter after them — but may-be she never got it!"

"Yes, it's Thanks-giving night, Mary! and if I had loved the graves of my parents as I ought, we should not be here, where our children that are away will never find our own. Well, well! I'm too old to hunt, and if the trapping turns out no better than it did last year, we'll have our next Thanks-giving, Mary, where there will be no end to it! and sure you have earned the *right* to be at rest, by your faithfulness, however it may go with me!"

While this picture was floating through my mind, I had learned from occasional sentences, that our host was the son of parents of respectability; but his father had foolishly left the agricultural life, which he understood and was pursuing prosperously, for cities and merchandize, for which he had no talent. He died a bankrupt, leaving one son at the age of eight years and a daughter of eighteen. The latter had been affianced, during her father's prosperity, to the son of a man of wealth; but that wealth had been the result of the closest selfishness in early life. As usual, the native vulgarity of feeling and heartlessness of character which had caused his unwonted and undeserved pecuniary success, remained unchanged in the days of his spurious social elevation. He forbade the further visits of his son the moment the disaster of the parent of his intended wife was known. He forbade it suddenly and without a warning. The consequences were such as are almost too frequent to attract attention. A lovely woman pined a few years over the ill-requested needle, and died "in a decline."

"A young man about town" looked sad for a few months, and then married an heiress to extend the curse of hereditary meanness.

In the little village where our host was reared, by a near relative in the original occupation of his father, he formed his attachment to his present companion: She was then a teacher, starving upon the *liberal* salary that rewards the principal of a female common

school in "the State where education is universal." To marry at home would have required sacrifices of conventional rank on the part of his intended, to which his pride would not suffer him to reduce her; for how could he ask her to share the fortunes of a laborer in the field? To wait until their united efforts would enable them to secure a farm, was more than his impatience could endure. In evil hour a bright dream of the west had thrown him into the wilderness, and rendered him dependent upon the accidents of sun and rain for protection against the tender mercies of a Land Company — which calculated upon the profits of indiscretion and extended credit willingly, while accepting actual payment with regret. His energies might probably bear him through his trials, could he be contented to avoid expansion until the flood-tide of civilization might have time to reach his retreat, but already he was restless, and his eyes were directed to the fatal west — and it appeared painfully probable that a few short years would find him again dependent on his axe, or a prey to larger speculations in a deeper wilderness.

We soon retired to our comfortable cat-tail beds, by the light of a domestic candle, regretting that our kind entertainers refused us the extempore lodging on the floor to which, in true woodland courtesy, they condemned themselves.

It was long before sleep relieved the unpleasant thoughts awakened by the conversation of the evening. My mind wandered over many a tale of the woods, in which blighted hopes and ruined prospects constituted the prominent features. True, I had seen much of happiness in similar situations, — for Providence has constructed some one of the human family peculiarly fitted to occupy each niche in the great temple of society, — but how frequently the abuse of the inestimable privilege of *free will* renders it a curse instead of a blessing. I sometimes think that the exceptions constitute the rule, and that a small minority only ever accomplish the destiny for which they were created. Jarring, confusion, and disorder mark every page of nature, — every paragraph of history! Here was a man of spirit, enterprise, energy, and talent, who had fled from the only field where happiness was proffered at a slight expense of pride, to waste his powers upon a wilderness for the benefit, in all probability, of certain merchants and capitalists in Holland. He dragged down with him an amiable being who was fitted by her moral excellencies, and even by her education, humble as it may have been, for a far wider sphere of usefulness; and why? Because he could not bear to ask a fond and loving woman to descend to a station which she would have gloried to share with him!

How little men know of the true character of the self-sacrificing sex, until the frosts of old age begin to crown their venerable fronts, and they find their knowledge useless!

It is said that there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous; but, although legend upon legend crowded on my memory, the pathetic had still the ascendancy, and I entertained my companion with

stories, not all of which were colored in rain-bow hues, until the moon-light deserted the casement, and the fatigue of nearly forty miles of travel enabled us to sink into repose. As one of these recollections is pertinent to the occasion, and illustrative of life in the woods, it may not be amiss to offer it to the reader. It furnishes an instance of indiscretion which, could the effect have been foreseen, would be esteemed an act of cruelty worthy of the worst days of the inquisition. And yet it was perpetrated by a female — by one who should have known the peculiarities of her sex!

"Our highly intelligent friend, Mc ———," said I, "has resided for some years in the town of ———, and has become familiar with the independent life of a western village. She owns a considerable tract of wild land on the New York border, and, as her husband's eccentricities (for he is an American Old Mortality) are equal with his fame and classical acquirements, she thought it best to proceed by herself, on horse-back, to visit the property and examine its resources. After journeying for several days by every stages and frequented routes, she took an appropriate path and plunged into the forest.

After much difficulty and fatigue, she arrived at the cabin of a squatter, which she knew to have been *located* for many years on or near her line. The visit of the owner was not unsafe, for the man was a bee-hunter, trapper, and timber thief of the most gentle manners, and utterly despised all efforts at clearing beyond the acre. His pigs — his only stock — ran wild in the woods, and he cared nothing for real estate so long as there were trees left for a deer-cover, timber to be stolen, bees to be limed, and a bounty for wolves. He looked upon a new settlement as only another market and prowling ground, incommoding him in nothing, and likely to increase the dainties of his larder by an occasional chicken and eggs. He lived for the *present* — dreamed neither of the *past* nor the *future* — and nothing but habitual laziness prevented him from being perpetually peripatetic. He was absent from home when Mrs. ——— arrived, and she was received with back-woods hospitality by his wife; — for even this creature, whose only beverage was "*Le vin ordinaire de ce pays ci — un liqueur abominable qu'on appelle Oniskey!*" actually had a wife, and an affectionate one, who had resided on or near the spot since the days of Jefferson! After a comfortable night of repose upon a bundle of dried leaves, in her riding suit, Mrs. ——— arose, and made preparations for *viewing the property*. No lady neglects the toilet, even in the most distressing circumstances. I have several times heard death preferred to the loss of a fine head of hair, in the wards of a hospital, and it is not to be supposed that Mrs. R. was unprovided with a looking-glass. She proceeded to withdraw the several appurtenances of the dressing-room from her well-stored portmanteau, narrowly and wonderingly watched by her kind hostess. But the instant the mirror appeared, the lonely denizen of the wilds exclaimed, with startling energy —

"Oh! dear Mrs. R.! That's a looking-glass! Do

let me look in it! I have not seen my face plainly for thirty years! I go down to the spring sometimes and try to see myself; but the water is so rough that it don't look at all like me! Do let me look at it! Do now!"

The glass was handed to the delighted woman. She cast but one glance upon it. The mirror fell in fragments on the floor, the unfortunate creature fainted and fell back on the rude bench behind her, and Mrs. R. visited her ample domain, that day, with a head half combed.

The very early breakfast the next morning was a cheerful one. When it was completed, we rode over by the squire's, with our host for a guide, and after proceeding about three miles into the woods, tied our horses at the termination of all signs of road, and advanced on foot. We soon separated, the merchant and the farmer to estimate the chances of water-power, iron beds, timber, and lime quarries, and I, with my host's rifle, a paper of pins, a botanical box, and a pocket insect net, to my favorite pursuits. We agreed to rendezvous at the place of parting when the hour of three arrived; and, being all familiar with the art of navigating the forest, there was no danger of a failure in meeting the engagement. When we returned from our excursions, and I observed the disappointed look of my Athenian friend, I felt myself the richer, notwithstanding he styled himself possessor of five thousand acres, and I bore upon my shield the footless birds of a younger son; for my hat was serried with glittering insects, impaled upon its crown and sides; my box was stored with rarities, and, on a hickory pole across my shoulder, hung a great horned owl, a hawk, twelve headless black squirrels, and a Canada porcupine!

We stopped at the squire's for a dinner; and, strange to say, succeeded in inducing our host to bear us company, despite his political aversions; so that we have reason to believe that our visit was successful in settling a feud which had seriously curtailed the comforts of both parties for nearly three long years. As we were rambling over the ground, while our meal was in preparation, our attention was called to a tamed marmot or ground hog, that had been a favorite of the family during several years. He had just commenced burrowing a residence for his long months of hybernation—for the coolness of the nights forewarned him that the period of activity was nearly over. By the orchard fence, upon a little mound commanding a broad view of the squire's improvements, he sat upright on the grass, by the

side of the yellow circle of dust which his labors already rendered sufficiently conspicuous. The sun obliquely shed a milder and more contemplative light over a scene softened by the autumnal haze. The foliage wore the serious depth of green which precedes the change of the leaf, and, on the higher ground, small patches of yellow, red and brown began to vary the uniformity of the forest. He sat with his fore-paws gently crossed upon his bosom, like an old man reposing at evening by the door of his cottage, calmly and peacefully reflecting that the labors of life were drawing to a close. The autumn wind sighed by, with a premonitory moan, and our philosophic friend threw up one ear to drink the ominous sound, shook his head, as it died away, with an obvious shudder, as though some chilly dream of winter disturbed his repose, and turning slowly round, commenced digging deliberately at his burrow. In a few minutes he reappeared and seemed again buried in contemplating the beauty of the scenery. Ere long another and a stronger blast swept through the trees, with a more threatening voice—bearing upon its wings a few withered leaves.

One of these fell close to the person of the marmot. The intimation was not to be mistaken. He gently descended to the horizontal attitude, crawled towards the unwelcome courier of decay, applied his nose to it for a moment, then, wheeling rapidly round, plunged suddenly into his hole and sent the dirt flying into the air by the rapid action of his fore-paws. I turned to the Exile of Connecticut, who had also watched this interesting scene, and remarked: "You propose to go to the prairies! It is summer with you yet, but I see that the leaves are beginning to turn: there are a few grey hairs gathering about your brow. Is it not time to choose your last resting place? to dig your last burrow?"

He felt the force of the query, and remained in thought for several minutes.

"If it were not for the next instalment, I think I should stay where I am till the neighborhood could grow up around us, and Mary could go to church and little John to school. But—I don't know!—I think I shall have to sell out and *flit* in the spring, if I could find a purchaser! I'm young yet; and that little beast did not throw the dirt so high in the spring."

Poor fellow! I hear that the ground reverted to the company two years afterwards; but whether he sold out and *flitted* with a full purse, or started on foot with his Mary and the children, and an axe on his shoulder, I have never heard.

## ELLEN LANING.

BY MRS. MARY H. PARSONS.

ELLEN LANING was a very beautiful girl, just reaching her eighteenth year. She possessed many accomplishments; a mind gifted, and stored with knowledge extensive and diversified. Her nature was generous and lofty, her heart pure, while her character was marked by much decision and firmness of purpose. She had faults, and they were of a nature to cast dark shadows on her future life. Alas that it should be so! that defects apparently trifling should have power to dim the shining beauties of the heart and mind. Ellen's temper was passionate; her will uncontrolled, while she was impatient of contradiction: to these were added a woman's loving heart and tender nature; and what a world of suffering was there in store for her, with such a combination of qualities. Her mother died when she was an infant: she was the only, and much indulged child of her father. Mr. Laning was, at the period we speak of, well advanced in years; warm-hearted and generous, he lacked decision of character, and was extremely irritable; he was an active business man, thought little of Ellen's faults, and certainly did not take especial care to correct them, when they attracted his notice. When Ellen was eight years old he married. His choice was a wise one; the second Mrs. Laning was every way qualified to rear up our heroine "in the way she should go;" but there was an obstacle in the way, in the injudicious fondness of the father, she was never able fully to overcome. Ellen improved surprisingly, but it may be doubted if her temper was in any degree corrected. Mrs. Laning died the year Ellen was fourteen, at a time when her influence began to be felt, and her kindness appreciated.

Mrs. Laning was a widow, the mother of one son, Herbert Montague, at the time of her marriage with Ellen's father. She was of French extraction, had married an Englishman, and removed with him to America. The year before her death, a brother who resided in France asked for her boy, offering, as he was old and childless, to adopt him. Mrs. Laning's health always uncertain, and at that time very precarious, induced her to consent, and Herbert had been sent to France. Our story opens at the period when he was hourly expected in America.

Ellen Laning was in the large room, used as a library, in her father's mansion. She was sitting in the cushioned chair appropriated to him, and her bright face was turned with a musing and thoughtful expression towards the open window. It was that season of the year when summer is paying her farewell visit, when the sun, as if in sorrow for his

long absence, withdraws behind the thin and hazy curtain that is wont to shade his glories in that time of "Indian summer." The air was soft and balmy as it touched her cheek, and the long shining curls stirred on her white neck, as they felt its influence. As the head rested back on the cushioned chair, the eye might have lingered long upon it, and still found new beauties to admire, in the ceaseless play of the sparkling features. The brow was nobly and beautifully formed; there was about the whole face that expression of intellect and feeling, without which mere beauty of feature is worthless, and which united with it constitutes loveliness of the highest and most superb order.

Ellen Laning's memory was busy with the scenes of other days; very vivid in her mind was the parting with Herbert Montague, her child-like distress, and his more manly grief; she remembered too, and it was with pain, her ebullitions of temper; her authoritative manner, against which he seldom rebelled; and her impatience of contradiction. "I wonder," she thought, "if Herbert remembers!" and a glowing spot came into her cheek. Perhaps no one ever lived that possessed a keener consciousness of her faults, a stronger sensitiveness in regard to them, or a more yearning desire to make amends for the wrong she had done than Ellen Laning. Yet she never expressed repentance in words; pride, and a species of shyness or reserve which she believed could not be overcome, always prevented her. The shadows that came over that fine face told truly how anxious was the heart within. Letters innumerable had been exchanged between Herbert and herself; they had been an index to his heart, that had deeply and warmly interested her own. It was wonderful how well her memory retained every syllable of reproof he had ever uttered; she remembered his words as though they were of yesterday.—"Ellen, Ellen! you will destroy your own happiness, and that of every one connected with you, if you do not overcome this irritability of temper." And now years, long years had gone; five-and-twenty was the age of Herbert Montague, and she herself was a woman, with many of the troubled feelings of a woman's heart already struggling in her bosom. "Will Herbert remember?" was her thought once more. The door opened, and he stood before her! She scarce remembered, in the dark and foreign looking stranger, her former playmate; but the smile, the clear musical voice, how soon it removed every doubt! "Ellen! dear Ellen, is it indeed you who have grown up into so perfect and lovely a woman!" And he took both her hands in his own,



and even kissed the glowing cheek which was not withdrawn from him. "He does not remember!" was the first instantaneous thought of Ellen, and a flood of unalloyed rapture swept over her heart; she could not restrain her tears, or articulate a single word.

"I have done wrong to come in so suddenly, but your father told me I should find you here, and you cannot even fancy, Ellen, how ardently I have longed for this moment." Ellen released her hand, and moved a chair towards him; she smiled—and a smile softer or sweeter never dwelt on the lips of woman—and her voice came again as she bade him welcome to his "Fatherland" with a grace peculiarly her own. She was herself again, and although Herbert might have been more interested in her agitation, he did not withhold the tribute of his warmest admiration to a mind and manners so attractive.

Herbert had come to America for an indefinite period, with many thoughts of residing here permanently; for the present he was domesticated in Mr. Laning's hospitable home. The first few weeks was a scene of perpetual sunshine: that love had grown up between them strong and mutual was nothing surprising. Herbert had not "told his love" in positive words, but in another language quite as satisfactory to Ellen: moreover she shrewdly suspected he only lingered because in doubt as to her sentiments. They mingled in the gay world together, and Herbert saw her surrounded by admirers attracted quite as much by her reputed wealth, as her beauty. He saw with pleasure, that she was wholly removed from the unprincipled wickedness of deliberate coquetry, that she kept herself aloof from those whose attentions, if serious, she could not receive—and all women can discriminate when that is the case. There was nothing in her conduct that did not meet his approbation; reason and feeling alike pronounced her a "most perfect woman." It was at this period two friends came to spend the winter with her; they were sisters—the Misses Warrender. They had been invited some time before Herbert had announced his intention of coming, or it is probable Ellen would have dispensed with their presence. Anna Warrender was a very well informed woman, she had a great flow of words, so that her ideas were always clothed in a becoming garb, talked well and much, expressing herself with the greatest possible elegance and accuracy. She was thirty, although she did not look more than five-and-twenty, had a countenance of decided intelligence, but not gentle, or feminine; worldly, selfish and heartless, poverty made her aim at being "everything to all parties," and in this (as such persons always are) she was detected by the looker on. Her object was popularity; indeed, she was generally liked. Here and there might be found those who had an instinctive dread of her *insincerity*; who felt they could not trust her; who almost fancied they saw the bland smile changing to a sneer, while soft words of flattery yet lingered

on the ear. She was tall, her figure good, dressed with taste and elegance, and except that in conversation she was addicted to talking more than listening, was certainly agreeable if not interesting. To marry herself well, which hitherto she had failed to accomplish, was an important object, and certainly it struck her that Herbert Montague was a most desirable match. I have simply detailed the character she had borne through life; she had never been guilty of a greater offence than widening a breach between friends whenever she could do it with safety; what circumstances may make of her remains to be seen.

Lucy Warrender was commonplace in every respect; remarkable only for devotion to her sister, whom she regarded as something altogether different from common clay. Miss Warrender soon discovered how matters stood between the lovers; it was discouraging to be sure, but she did not despair, resolving to "bide her time."

One morning the three ladies were discussing a ball, and preparing sundry little nick-nacks for the occasion. Ellen's dress was every moment expected home, and she was not a little anxious to see it. Herbert was reading and listening, often drawn from his book by the lively prattle going on around him. A servant entered, and said a little girl was below who wished to see Miss Laning.

"Show her up," said Ellen, scarcely raising her eyes from a trimming she was tastefully arranging for Miss Warrender.

In a few moments a little girl entered, with so anxious a countenance, that it instantly attracted Ellen's attention, who said kindly—

"What is your errand with me, my little girl?"

"My mother will not be able to finish your dress, Miss Laning, she is very sick indeed!"—and the child's tremulous tones bore witness to the truth of what she said. "Not finish my dress!" exclaimed Ellen in visible anger—"tell your mother it is the last article she shall ever have of mine to make. I am astonished at her conduct: she knew the ball was to-night, and that I could not have it finished elsewhere at this late hour. You may go," she added haughtily to the child, who, frightened and in tears, left the room.

"I am quite surprised, Ellen, you patronise that Mrs. Watson; she is very unfashionable," said Miss Warrender.

"I know it," said Ellen sharply, "I employed her simply because she was destitute; I wish I had never seen her!"

"Don't regret a good action, Ellen," said a low voice at her side that made her start, and she turned to him from whom it came, whose sad, grave look distressed her, although she made an effort not to regard it.

"I do not exactly regret it," she said peevishly, "but there is not a woman of my acquaintance that would leave a fashionable dressmaker for such a cause. And to think she should serve me in this way. Why didn't she tell me sooner?"—as if expecting a reply, she looked at Miss Warren-

that that lady only smiled, and there was something in her smile that irritated Ellen.

"If you had listened to the child's explanation you would probably have heard the reason for this delay; perhaps the mother's illness would have been with most ladies, an all-sufficient plea. You have been unjust, Ellen"—and Herbert's tone was cold, and even stern. Ellen was stung.

"I really cannot see," she said, "that Mr. Montague is a judge of this matter. As I am little accustomed to such interferences, I choose to dispense with them for the future"—and she inclined her head with a haughty motion to Herbert and left the room. Miss Warrender—the quick-sighted and far-seeing Miss Warrender—instantly followed her, and by every blandishment that could flatter her self love and lull her sense of right, she managed to stifle the reproach of conscience and strengthen her determination to punish Herbert's insolence.

Let us turn to Herbert. That single little scene had brought back the past with overwhelming force in his mind. It was as though the curtain that had shaded the scenes of his boyhood had been torn asunder by a strong grasp and the whole picture exposed vividly to view. In the days long gone he remembered things until now forgotten; or if thought of at all, considered as the follies of a girl. Was she the same then? She, that his heart had sat on high, a thing more than beautiful, for he thought her good! And bitter, and full of anguish were the thoughts that chased each other through his bosom. Herbert was wise, temperate and firm-minded; patient, energetic and persevering: there was much of reverence in his character, an earnest love of the beautiful, of esteem for the good. He had rational views of married life; looked soberly on that which most men view through the medium of excitement; and he felt too surely there was no happiness for either party without mutual forbearance. It was a curious coincidence that his uncle, who had reared him with such judicious kindness, had always warned him to beware of an ill-tempered wife, and he gave his reasons—in the history of his wedded life! Death had cut down that miserable wife in the very spring time of her life; her husband followed her to the grave without regret, and gave no reverence to her memory, although the lapse of time must have obliterated from his mind many of her faults. Long and painful were Herbert's reflections; he did not quarrel with his attachment to Ellen, but—he would observe—he would abide by the result. Alas! that it should be necessary.

When Herbert and Ellen met at tea there was a hardly perceptible coldness on her part, of gravity on his. Miss Warrender chattered incessantly, her spirits rising in proportion as theirs fell; they became so silent that her sister was the only one to reply to her. After tea was over Ellen, who felt almost unhappy, said—

"Do you intend going to the ball, Mr. Montague?"

"Mr. Montague certainly does," replied Herbert with a smile. That smile entered Ellen's heart like sunshine. She extended her hand, while tears trembled in her eyes. Herbert felt them an acknowledgment for her fault: he pressed that little hand warmly, and thought he would rather possess it than a kingdom. Remember, reader, my hero was a lover—like snow, when the sun mounts highest, melt down the good resolves of such before the shrine of radiant beauty. Ellen looked half ashamed as she met Miss Warrender's glance, who, however, seemed obligingly unobservant of what had passed. Just as Ellen had finished dressing for the ball Miss Warrender entered her apartment.

"Ellen," she said, "I am disposed to ask you a question, although I have my doubts about the answer—You are engaged to Herbert Montague, of course?"

"No 'of course' about it," said Ellen abruptly; "neither do I understand by what right you question me."

"I beg ten thousand pardons, my dear love! it was mere curiosity. How beautiful that necklace is! let me fasten it for you?" Ellen yielded with a very ill grace. She was thoroughly out of temper; angry with herself because she had suffered her preference for Herbert to become manifest to Miss Warrender: and that lady divining the truth, contrived by her artful insinuations to make matters worse. It is true, if Ellen had seriously asked herself what had been the cause of quarrel, she would have had difficulty in defining it exactly; but passionate people seldom reason, they yield to a rush of angry feeling that distorts every fact and misinterprets every action into cause of dire offence. Moreover the charm was broken; she had been *once* angry at Herbert, and forgiven; the fit was on her again, and the cloud on her brow abated not one whit when she received the pleasant greeting of Herbert. He was vexed, and gave his undivided attention to Miss Warrender. That ball, for which Ellen had so anxiously prepared, which she had looked forward to as a scene of triumph and pleasure, was witness to the bitterest sorrow her young heart had ever known. But there was no regret; on the contrary, her bitter feelings were strengthened by Herbert's attention to Miss Warrender. We pass over the two weeks that followed, rendered miserable to both by misunderstandings and unkind feelings, aggravated it is true by the mischief-maker that beset their path.

At the end of that time Ellen received a few lines from Herbert requesting her presence in the library. She had been too wretched not to avail herself of this prospect of reconciliation—her sufferings had not been without profit. Herbert met her at the door, and led her to a seat. He said kindly "We have both been unhappy, and without just cause; but I think I see a way that will end all difficulties, if you have firmness to hear the truth spoken. Is it so, Ellen?"

Ellen looked in the face of one so very, very dear to her, and her reply was—"Say on, Herbert, all

that is in your heart; I will listen; perchance I may profit by it. I have been often wrong since our unhappy misunderstanding." Herbert hesitated, and well he might; her beauty wound with its wondrous spell through every fibre of his heart; her many charms of mind and manners were vividly before him. Yet what he next said might cause her to spurn him for ever. But Herbert was true to himself—to Ellen.

"You remember, Ellen, when we parted long ago?—I loved you as a brother might love an only sister; we were allowed to correspond, and my feelings became of a warmer, deeper character. I cannot tell you now the absorbing interest your letters created in my mind; I watched the gradual unfolding of your noble intellect, the development of so many admirable traits of character, with feelings neither vague nor undefined. Ellen! dear Ellen! may I not say with truth, I loved you before I ever saw you!—and oh! when I did see you—when to all these many excellencies was joined the spell of such surpassing beauty—I have no words to tell—language cannot do justice to my feelings! I do not ask you, Ellen, if that love is returned; I have no right to until you have heard me through: but you will remember that what I am about to say is dictated by the strongest affection for yourself that man is capable of feeling. If you were a common woman I would not venture it, but your noble nature is equal to any self-exertion. Will you not anticipate, and save me this painful truth? Oh! Ellen, it can be no secret to yourself, that your indulgence of temper has already seriously affected your happiness, and must eventually destroy it." During the whole time he had spoken Ellen had remained motionless; the colour had deepened on her cheek till it became crimson; but as the last words passed his lips she grew suddenly pale—so pale that even her lips took the hueless colour of her face; but such was the strong mastery of passion, that no other evidence of emotion was visible. And when her voice came at last, though it scarce sounded like the sweet voice of Ellen Laning, she replied:—

"I have listened to all you have had to say, sir; allow me to congratulate you on your unique mode of courtship! By the way, it can scarce be styled a wooing. Pray give this piece of insolence a name! Perhaps you mean, if the naughty girl behaves herself, and her master is satisfied, she shall have a husband! Is that your meaning, sir?" and she lifted up her flashing eyes and bent the full glare of their intolerable light upon him. But there was something in Herbert's look of mingled agony and despair that sobered even her. He raised his hand, as though he would shut out the sight. "Better now," he said bitterly, "than when too late; there is but one sufferer: if you had been my wife, Ellen, I should have had the unutterable misery of seeing *you* wretched—and God knows I could not have borne it!" He rose up. "Ellen, I am answered—fearfully answered. I will burden you no longer with my presence: when the ocean

rolls between us, you will suffer me to think of what might have been our lot if you had listened to me in kindness? Farewell!" he murmured indistinctly, for his voice was broken, and he left the room. He lingered one moment by the door, scarce able to force himself away, when a sudden and heavy fall startled him. Hardly knowing what he feared, he re-entered the room. Ellen had fallen, and lay quite motionless. As he raised her up and bore her to the window her cold, white face startled and shocked him, there was so little semblance of life in those rigid features. The shock had indeed come with sudden and stunning effect on the poor misguided girl; but what man living could resist such evidence of attachment? Not Herbert Montague. Oh! she was dear, unutterably dear to him: past apprehensions and fears were swallowed up in the gushing stream of warm affection that flowed from his heart. And when light came again to the eyes, and he saw that with consciousness came pain, and self reproach, he murmured in tones of tenderness that dwelt in Ellen's ear long after—"Forget the past, Ellen, and forgive; say that you will be mine, and we will be happy still." Ellen's tears flowed fast as she listened, and thoughts and feelings such as she had never known filled her mind. "Herbert," she said at length, "it may be gratifying to my vanity to hear this last appeal—nay, it gives me joy to know you are willing to take me, faults and all! But I will be worthy of you: I will conquer my temper, cost what it may: yet I must have patience on your part, unwearied patience. You must not expect good results too soon: remember the years it has grown! But if you will bear with me, even as your mother did, in a time that is long gone, I will try to reward you, as I never did her!" and a burst of tears finished the sentence. Herbert's words of encouragement came soothingly to her heart, and the barrier broken, she spoke freely of the distress she often endured for want of self government. "Two years shall be the time of my probation; if I am not conqueror then I never shall be. Yours will be no easy task, Herbert; patience, patience, patience! the first and third requisite."

"Do not fear me, Ellen: but one year is a very long time, I never will consent to two." Ellen shook her head, and the sad and thoughtful expression that passed over her fine face brought to Herbert's recollection the superb simile of the poet—"a woman's eye that looked like shaded water:" far down in their dreamy depths lay a world of glowing tenderness and feeling all imaged in the deep blue of those loving eyes. In so far, Ellen had proved herself worthy of Herbert's love, and when they parted, and he blessed her with a solemnity of feeling natural to his character in moments of excitement, she raised his hand to her lips and kissed it; a tear moistened the spot, and Ellen felt no shame that it was so: a calm had stolen into her heart; a blessed sense of happiness, unlike all other feelings; and oh! how much superior to the joys that had filled up the sum of her

past life. Some hours of that day she devoted to reflection: in the beautiful language of inspiration, "she communed with her own heart and was still!" And Ellen gathered strength from such communion—strength and hope—for she felt her proneness to yield easily to her besetting sin, and looked forward with many fears to the result.

A few days after this the Miss Warrenders held "high converse" in their chamber, a part of which we mean to relate.

"Have you noticed, Lucy," began the elder, "the alteration in the state of affairs? I should say, from present appearances, that Montague was an accepted lover."

"I hinted something of the sort to Mr. Laning; he smiled and said, 'Not exactly.'" [We may as well state here that Ellen's father had been made acquainted with the facts.]

"Oh, you did?" said Miss Warrender—"it must be confessed you have few scruples in the way of gratifying your curiosity. But to our subject:—from a remark I overheard of Herbert's last evening I think Ellen is on trial."

"On trial! Mr. Laning, so rich, so beautiful, so admired!" and Miss Lucy's eyes opened twice their usual width in undisguised astonishment.

"With ordinary men, I grant; but Herbert Montague is not an ordinary man: he will not marry her with all her beauty—and what is more, with all his love for her, unless she curb her temper."

"What a match he is, to be sure!" cried Lucy; "indeed, Anna, I always thought he would just suit you—so handsome and distinguished looking!"

"Pshaw!" was the reply; but there was a tone of bitterness in that single word that found its way to the understanding of Lucy, simple as she was. A long silence followed, broken at length by Miss Warrender.

"There is a way left yet, Lucy—what if our charming hostess, in some whirlwind, should order him out of doors?—I wonder if we could raise a whirlwind?"

"A what?" was the dull reply of the bewildered Lucy.

"Pshaw!" was again the answer of her sister. She considered a moment: it would not do to offend Lucy, that was clear.

"Cannot you comprehend?" she said blandly—"you were wont to be a smart, cunning girl, who could manage a little matter of this kind nicely. Now listen, Lucy." And Lucy's ears opened wide to words prefaced by flattery, as acceptable as rare; for Miss Warrender's honied compliments were never wasted on the members of her own family, unless some special object was in view, as was the case at present. It is not necessary to detail further their conversation, its result will soon become apparent.

The next day they were all in the library. Ellen was drawing; it was one of her greatest accomplishments; she had much natural taste for it, which had been highly cultivated. She had almost completed a sketch from nature of great beauty.

"Only look, Herbert, it is almost done! I am really proud of it; it is one of my best efforts." Herbert admired, and pointed out beauties that had escaped even her partial eye. Ellen left her seat for a moment to cross the room, in search of some brushes she needed. Herbert, who was standing, turned to look after her. She had some difficulty in finding them. He joined in the search. Lucy Warrender, who was writing, rose up with the open inkstand in her hand, ascended several steps to look for a book—slipped—very nearly fell—when down went the inkstand, crash! crash! through the delicate frame-work of the drawing, while the black stream poured fast and far, until every trace of Ellen's exquisite workmanship was obliterated!

"My drawing!" screamed Ellen—"you have ruined it for ever, you little wretch! Was there ever such an infamous piece of work!" and she could not restrain her tears.

"Upon my word, Miss Lucy," exclaimed Herbert indignantly, "I am at a loss to discover how you accomplished that feat. Pray, madam, what were you doing with the inkstand up there?"

"I had it in my hand when I went to look for the book, so I had!" and Lucy began to whimper.

"I am almost afraid to ask you to forgive her," said Miss Warrender addressing Ellen, (anxious, no doubt, for the results of their *experiment*;) "it was the most horrible carelessness I ever saw her guilty of. Do forgive her, Ellen?"

Ellen had struggled with her temper as she had never done before; she trembled all over from excitement, and could scarcely command herself to silence. Herbert's indignation soothed her wonderfully, and by the time Miss Warrender had put the concluding question she could answer calmly—

"Let us say no more about it: Miss Lucy will excuse my rudeness when the accident happened, I am sure!" and she bowed gracefully to the conscience-stricken Lucy as she moved to the bell-rope and rang for a servant to remove the ruined drawing.

"Let us walk, Ellen," said Herbert, "the air will do you good;" and they did so. Words of approbation and love that gladdened the ear on which they fell were uttered with all a lover's fondness by Herbert. But he spoke soberly and earnestly of the happiness in store for herself if she persevered; and he proceeded farther in portraying the miseries of an ungoverned temper than he had ever ventured to do. Ellen received it kindly. Several scenes similar to the above were enacted, but Ellen was proof against all attacks. Be it remarked, that all causes of irritation had come from a source in which her *affections* had no interest: moreover, her self love had not been wounded; and self love was a trait in Ellen's character that had necessarily grown strong from long indulgence.

"Ellen, do you intend going to Mrs. Marsden's to-night?" said Miss Warrender as they sat alone in the drawing-room.

"I have hardly thought about it," said Ellen indifferently.

"Nor consulted," rejoined Miss Warrender with the least perceptible sneer.

"Consulted whom?" and Ellen looked up in some surprise.

"Mr. Montague, to be sure; why who else could it be?"

"I don't exactly understand you, Miss Warrender?"

"Why you know, my dear love, you venture on nothing without Mr. Montague's consent or approbation."

"I really was not aware of the fact," retorted Ellen angrily, and she felt conscious that her colour deepened.

"Perhaps not," said Miss Warrender, "and it really surprises your friends very much. Young, rich, beautiful, the belle of the season, there is not a man in town that would not rejoice in your smile! Do not, my sweet girl, spoil your lover; it will be time to wear the yoke when your neck is in it. I do not know any girl more admired than yourself, or one that wears her honours with a better grace." Ellen made no reply, and Miss Warrender plied the needle busily, and sang some snatches of a song before she again asked indifferently—"Shall you go to Mrs. Marden's to-night?"

"Yes," replied Ellen coldly, "I think I shall." Miss Warrender saw the arrow had entered; that her insinuations, implying nothing, or everything, had taken effect. "So the world think I am under Herbert's management. What a charitable, wise-judging world it is!" were thoughts that dwelt often and uneasily on Ellen's mind that day. She did not see Herbert through the day, he was engaged to dine with a friend. When evening came she went up stairs to change her dress, but had scarcely entered her chamber before she received a message from Herbert, wishing to know if she meant to go out this evening. "Certainly," she replied, "I shall be ready in an hour." The servant very soon returned. Mr. Montague would be glad to see her for one moment.

Ellen went reluctantly. Herbert saw the cloud, and without divining the cause, said kindly, "You seem to be as little disposed for gaiety to-night as I am. I am really not well, my dear Ellen, and am almost selfish, I fear, in requesting you to remain with me." Ellen looked up quickly. All that Miss Warrender had said flashed through her mind and rendered her unwilling to remain.

"Your illness is nothing serious, I hope?" she said.

"No, but I have a severe headache, and am really unfit for society. Will you stay with me, Ellen?" She was silent, and Herbert saw with pain she was displeased also. "It is of no consequence; do not think of it for another moment, Ellen. Perhaps for a headache a sound sleep would be a better panacea than even the tones of your sweet voice." He smiled on her, but there was no answering smile, and disappointed, Herbert

slowly left the room. Ellen's first false step was leading her on, until her hold on herself was fast loosening: a thousand miserable thoughts were in her heart, and she felt herself angry at Herbert, although her conscience warned her it was without just cause. With a heavy heart and many troubled feelings she arrayed herself for that evening of pleasure. When she informed the Miss Warren- ders that her father would escort them, they expressed some surprise: Ellen coldly said, "Mr. Montague had a severe headache—home was the best place for him." To Mrs. Marsden's they went. Miss Warrender separated herself from her companions, and joining Mr. Laning in another part of the room, begged him to see her safely home—"I am really faint, and sick, and shall recover the moment I breathe fresh air, and will not have one word said to Ellen, who is enjoying herself so much." Mr. Laning acquiesced, attended her to the carriage, and in two hours from the time she had left it she was in Mr. Laning's house again. Entering the drawing-room, she interrupted a comfortable nap Mr. Montague was enjoying—hoped his head was better—was grieved to hear of his illness. He thanked her; he was decidedly better, and was surprised at her early return. "Oh! the heat was intolerable; such a crowd one could scarcely move. I wonder that woman ever gives parties in such a house; it won't hold thirty people comfortably, and she has not less than two hundred! I did my best to persuade Ellen to return, my illness was such a good excuse, but she voted the company charming, and refused to stir a step. To be sure she had secured the best beau in the room; few women can be dull with Richard Loring's undivided attention. Don't you think Loring perfectly irresistible?" and here Miss Warrender paused, literally to recover breath.

"Irresistible!" laughed Herbert, "why not exactly; but fascinating, most certainly he is; I have rarely known his equal in conversational power."

"Just so; I have heard Ellen say the same often;" and then she rambled on to other subjects, interesting and amusing her auditor. Returning to the subject ever present in her mind, she lifted a miniature likeness of Ellen from the table.

"How beautiful Ellen is," she said, "and what an admirable likeness this is of her!"

"It is indeed," replied Herbert, "I think I have never seen a better." Miss Warrender looked at it intently, seeming to be lost in thought. "I really think Loring is mistaken," she said at length.

"In what?" asked Herbert.

"Why I heard him tell Ellen this evening, that a painter could no more transfer the varied beauties of her sweet face to canvass, than he could catch the varying shades of sunlight on the water; it was mind that threw its irradiating and glorious light over all!" Herbert was silent, and it must be owned, not altogether pleased. Miss Warrender turned the conversation easily and skillfully, and Herbert was sufficiently interested to listen, or appear to do so. He was not of a jealous disposition,

but somewhat exacting in his demands on the affections of those he loved. He could not but remember Ellen's unwillingness to remain at home, and often during that night his fancy imaged her listening with rapt attention to the graceful flattery of Richard Loring.

Ellen Laning's eyes opened slowly and reluctantly as the sunshine of early morning poured its bright light into her sleeping room. In some surprise she saw Miss Warrender standing at her bedside.

"Anna! you are an early visitor, truly. By the way, how did it happen you left so soon last evening? I should have been happy to have attended you home if I had known of your illness."

"It was of no consequence; the heat overcame me: I could not think of disturbing your enjoyment."

"Enjoyment!" said Ellen bitterly; "I was bored to death, and would have been glad of any excuse to get off. Herbert was lucky in his headache."

"Oh! I rather think he was afraid of the horrors you encountered. I found him quite well when I returned; we chatted for two hours at least. What a fund of humour he possesses, and how charming he can make himself!" Ellen's brow contracted, but she was silent. "I think," continued Miss Warrender, "you must have made a new conquest, Ellen. I heard Loring pay you a compliment last night such as few women ever receive, or indeed deserve."

Ellen's eyes sparkled, and her colour rose.—"Once before, Miss Warrender, I explained to you fully my feelings towards Richard Loring; never name him again to me in the character of a lover. I never converse with him without mournful feelings, for his high and glorious gifts of intellect are dimmed, dishonoured, and will eventually be destroyed by the dissipation into which he plunges so madly. His nights are devoted to excesses, his days are frittered away in unmeaning frivolities; there is nothing left him but the pity and contempt of the wise and good." Ellen sighed, for she had thought often and long of Loring, with a mingling of admiration for his high qualities, of scorn for their utter prostitution. Miss Warrender lingered in the room, and assisted playfully in arranging the curls over Ellen's bright brow. At length she said laughingly—"If you don't punish that recreant knight of yours for such wicked excuses as he is given to make, the world will think you have made him master before his time. I would not allow it."

"Nonsense! Miss Warrender, will you just be quiet about Herbert?" Ellen was angry, and she thought now with very good cause.

"I have seen more years than you, Ellen, and you may take my word for it, there is nothing gained by being too submissive. I tell you this as a friend; I hope you will not take it amiss." Now Miss Warrender's manner had an air of such warm sincerity, was so earnest, so anxious not to give offence, that Ellen was impressed by it. A frown

gathered over her brow, and it was still there when Herbert met her at breakfast. It wanted but a spark to kindle the flame, and that was supplied by the watchful Miss Warrender. Regardless for herself in Ellen's estimation, she ventured some remarks, equivocal, but insolent if understood: Ellen's eyes flashed, and she showered down upon her a whole volley of sarcastic and bitter words, which Miss Warrender bore with invincible good temper. The boundary once passed, Ellen cared for nothing, and her perfect recklessness in saying the most aggravating things she could possibly think of was only one of her characteristics when in the mood. Herbert did not hear all this with the pain he would have done twenty-four hours earlier; he did not hear it with the patience he had promised; he did not speak kindly, or even gently, but he said with cold severity—

"Whatever you may think or feel towards us all, and to Miss Warrender in particular, the rites of hospitality should not be infringed. Your duty as hostess should have taught you to spare the feelings of your guests!" Ellen grew pale with anger. "When I need a monitor I shall employ one; for the present I feel it unnecessary, and Mr. Montague will understand now, and hereafter, that I regard such language from him as insolent"—and here Ellen rose up and fixed her flashing eyes full upon him—"most unwarrantable, and presumptuous, and such as I will not, *under any circumstances*, permit!" She left the room. Herbert did the same, and in the solitude of his own chamber gave himself up to the sad and troubled thoughts that oppressed him. This was the end of all the fair promises and bright hopes that had cheered him. Folly! folly to depend on them! and bitterly he reproached himself now, as these thoughts hurried through his mind. If he remembered his promise, it was only to think the day of patience had gone by. He wrote to Ellen, and more than once the tears filled his eyes while he penned that letter, but it was done with the manner of one who believed there was no other alternative. He left town the next morning, on a visit to the "far west" of our country.

Let us turn to Miss Warrender, who had been told by Ellen that a further extension of her visit at present would be inconvenient. The tears actually forced their way from eyes all unused to the "melting mood," when she heard of Herbert's departure. "Foiled!" she muttered; "foiled in every way. Oh the fool, the bitter fool! to give up everything for that spoiled beauty. I have no patience with him! Gone off, nobody knows where. Well, I have done for her! there is some comfort in that; the presumptuous creature! She will carry a weary heart to her grave; I don't regret the trouble she has given me; she may wrap her robe of pride around her, but it will cover a broken heart!" It is certainly true, Miss Warrender's satisfaction was so great, at the misery she had inflicted on Ellen, that she was in a measure consoled for her own disappointment. She left Mr. Laning's house

the next day, taking leave of Ellen with as much manifestation of friendship as she had ever shown.

The last and loneliest, was Ellen. Pride, the strong pride of her nature, bore her up on the highest wave of passion. She would not retract—no! not one word. What *right* had Herbert Montague to use such language? There were many would gladly lay their fortunes at her feet on her own conditions—she would not submit to it! Thus she thought through all that day; but when night came, the tranquil night—when the stars shone out from their distant homes, and the pale moon looked down reprovingly on the restless world, and all sounds had died away on the quiet earth—a change came over her. “It was the first offence,” she murmured, “and Herbert promised to have patience. Oh surely he will come again, and we shall be happier than ever!” But there was a consciousness of guilt that oppressed her heavily, and hope, the polar star of life, deserted her. The night passed, and the morrow came; Ellen chanced to be alone in the library when Herbert’s letter was handed to her. Ah! how well she remembered their interview in that apartment, her *promises*, and their miserable end. That letter seemed the presage of coming ill; she gazed on the direction until the characters grew dim, she opened it slowly, and with a fearful sinking of the heart, that in after days she remembered as her severest punishment. It was the agony of suspense, and there is no heart so strong as to bear it without shrinking. Every syllable of that letter seemed graven on the mind of Ellen as she read, as in characters that time might never efface.

“You may think it presumptuous in me to address you, Miss Laning, under the circumstances in which we parted. I do not feel that it is so. You will listen to me, Ellen, for the sake of the same mother who loved us both; to the latest hour of my life, I shall feel in your welfare the interest of a brother—to more I shall never aspire. God has given you splendid gifts of mind and person—they were given to be a blessing to others; if we live rightly it is for those around us. Without the power to control yourself, you could neither give nor receive happiness. I speak plainly—it is better you should hear the truth. The world is before you, hundreds will worship at your shrine, and see no imperfection; let the one ray of truth prove stronger than the flattery addressed you. Ellen, I conjure you, be mistress of *yourself*, conquer your temper, or the fair fruit so tempting to the sight will be ashes at the core. When I think of what might have been, the pen drops from my nerveless hand. Ellen! Ellen! if with this great defect in your character I could have rendered you happy, how gladly would I have taken you to my heart! How worse than vain to talk of this! I feel assured you were satisfied of my affection; there is some comfort in that thought. May you be saved such suffering as mine at our separation. O Ellen! if it had been different—if you could have persevered in your good resolutions, how changed would

be our situation now! But this is madness. May the blessing of that God, who ever strengthens the repentant, rest upon you for ever.

HERBERT MONTAGUE.”

And this was the end! Where is the eye that could go down into that agonized heart, and portray its utter desolateness? Heavy, heavy, and stunning was the shock. Who can tell of the sleepless nights, the anxious days, the sinking of the heart when hope goes out for ever? Ellen, in the bitterness of that time you paid the heavy penalty of an indulged sin; in the hush of midnight, when no eye saw but One, was the agony of your deep repentance pitied and pardoned.

We pass over a year. The object of Ellen Laning’s life seemed greatly changed. She no longer lived for self; her gentleness of character was now apparently its most striking trait; and if she was sometimes thoughtful to sadness, she never yielded to melancholy. She struggled with steady firmness against such feelings; was constantly occupied in mind or body; and gained so strong a mastery over the emotions of her heart, that no eye could detect the truth without long and close observation. When Ellen thought of her reformation, she hoped it was perfect, but she felt herself little tried where all united in attentions to contribute to her happiness. It was at this period an attack of the gout brought Mr. Laning to the verge of the grave; he recovered slowly, unable to walk without assistance, and suffering almost constantly. From being a very active business man, he was reduced to the monotony of in-door life; so often in pain as to be unable to read. Always irritable, he was of course much more so in his illness, and Ellen’s task was no easy one. Most faithfully she performed it; she read to him and sang also; and her gentle voice was ever ready with its sweet tones to soothe and sustain. More than once her father questioned her of Herbert’s absence; he had not been present at the breakfast scene; but she seemed to suffer so much, that he desisted from further inquiry. Ellen kept her secret, and feeling grateful to her father that he had allowed her to do so, redoubled her attention to his comfort.

We will now leave them, and passing over an interval of some months, return to Herbert, who was at — Springs. Immediately on his arrival he encountered Edward Thornton, a gentleman whose acquaintance he had made in the west. Thornton was a very peculiar character, and a great favourite of Herbert’s withal. The small, keen, gray eyes, that looked out from beneath his shaggy eyebrows, saw far and clearly into the devious ways of the human heart; he loved to talk to Herbert of his success in his favourite study—human nature,—how, to his eye, every varying shade of the face had come laden with the secrets of the heart. Indeed, his power was almost wonderful, and he rarely, if ever, mistook character. Herbert had entire confidence in his judgment, and was always attracted by the ceaseless variety of his



vigorous and well stored mind. It was the morning after Herbert's arrival the following conversation passed between them.

"How long have you been here, Thornton, and how do you like it?"

"Two weeks—and I like it. I have been at my old study," was the reply of Thornton.

"Plenty of subjects here," said Herbert smiling.

"I have had but one subject."

"Man, or woman?" queried Herbert.

"Woman—they are better worth studying when they have heart and intellect combined," was Thornton's reply.

"Let us have it," said Herbert; "if you have spent two weeks in making out one woman, she must be extraordinary."

"And so she is," rejoined Thornton, seriously, "extraordinary in every point of view. I don't know her name, I did not choose to have any clue to her character, and would not ask it. And I tell you she is such a woman as we rarely, very rarely, see in this soul-destroying world!"

"You grow crazy, man!" said Herbert laughing outright, "why you are caught in spite of your resistance. What does your divinity look like?"

"I will tell you—she possesses beauty of the most striking character; a form that would grace a throne; an intellect whose clear light is softened down by the thousand tender charities that love to dwell in a woman's heart. She is all this, and more, far more. Surrounded by all that proclaims wealth, she declines social enjoyment, and devotes herself unremittingly to an invalid father. She never leaves him; her time is given sweetly, and freely; and if she had not the temper of an angel, the man's irritable humours would break her heart."

"You are 'clean gone,'" cried Herbert, with a burst of irrepressible laughter. "Why you rave like a Bedlamite! your day of freedom is over."

"Mistaken!" said Thornton shaking his head. "I have made a *discovery*—she has loved, and been disappointed."

"How do you make that out!"

"My old study!" said Thornton significantly; "there is an expression of suffering that at times steals over her face, which tells of bitter memories: she has no hope; patient endurance I can read plainly; I have thought, too, self-reproach. And once, when she deemed no human eye was on her, I saw tears, large blistering tears roll slowly, one after another, down her white cheek, while her thoughts were far back in the regions of the past. Herbert, there was suffering there!"

"I can well believe it,"—replied Herbert in a low tone, for there was a chord stirred in his bosom that made it tremble.

"Yes, there was grief there," continued Thornton, "the bitter grief of wasted affection, thrown back on itself. Poor girl! the world sneer, and the heartless laugh; but the good and gentle will pity, and respect you." Thornton was silent for many moments ere he resumed: "One evening I saw

them when the father had been unusually irritable, it seemed almost impossible for her to soothe him. Without asking his consent she sat down at his feet and sang. Oh! what a voice was hers!—the rich tones, sad, even in their exquisite beauty, still linger on my ear; they went to my heart, and the old man's too, for he laid his hand on her head, saying:—'God bless my sweet Ellen!'"

"Ellen!" exclaimed Herbert, and he turned so pale, and bent such a startled look on Thornton, as filled the latter with amazement.

"Ellen, I said; 'tis a common name."

"True, most true; and there is no similitude!" murmured Herbert.

"I don't exactly understand you," said Thornton dryly, "but it is late. Good morning. By the way you had better go to the rooms to-night, there will be some fine dancing." To the rooms Herbert went, when evening came; and there, at the farther end, stood—Ellen Laning. The satin she wore, was scarce whiter than her face—her large radiant eyes, subdued and softened in their expression, gave to her countenance a beauty that was almost spiritual. Yes, she was beautiful, even as in the days that Herbert so well remembered. It was the first evening she had appeared in public, and there was a hush throughout the room as she moved down in the dance; all eyes were upon her, and Herbert heard one lady say to another:—"She is beautiful—a queenly beauty—but to me, the life has gone out of those eyes—so large, so lustrous, and so lovely! See you not how cold they are? they do not brighten; there is no flush on the cheek; no excitement in her manner, yet music is pouring its glad notes in her ear, and the noblest are paying homage to her matchless beauty! Ellen Laning has a sorrow in her young heart, that has left its shadow on all her enjoyments." And Herbert knew that the lady who spoke was both an earnest and accurate observer of character. More than once his conscience smote him, as he threaded his way through the crowd; he remembered his promise to be patient, and he thought if he had blighted the young heart of Ellen Laning he scarce deserved forgiveness. He was pale, and had some difficulty in controlling his agitation; he saw that Thornton was Ellen's partner, and had just reached the place where they stood as the dance was over.

He stepped forward—"Miss Laning!"

Ellen started, and grew pale, but commanding herself by a strong effort, she bowed her head,—and "hoped she had the pleasure of seeing him well."

She turned instantly; and Thornton led her to a door opening on a balcony, and out into the fresh air. She trembled, notwithstanding her efforts. "Sit down," he said gently, "the fresh air will revive you, the heat has been too much for you."

"Thank you!" said Ellen feebly, and the sweet tones of her voice sank into the very heart of Thornton. "I will bring you a glass of water,"

he said abruptly, believing rightly a few moments of solitude would benefit her more than anything else. He passed Herbert as he went in, and with a warm heart, throbbing with indignation, and all the fiery rashness characteristic of him when fully roused, he caught Herbert's arm and led him aside: bending his mouth close to his ear he said fiercely:—"Let me tell you, my friend, if you have wronged that girl in word, or thought, you are a scoundrel not fit to cumber the earth! And I would blow your brains out, as quick as I would do that!"—snapping his fingers in his face. Herbert shook off his grasp with a quiet dignity peculiar to him, and said calmly:—"Regain your senses, Thornton, and then you will recollect I am incapable of such baseness." He turned away, but it was with a heart heavy, and full of misery; Ellen had shrunk at his approach, if not in anger, at least in coldness; love for him had gone out from her heart for ever; what right had he to hope it would be otherwise? He had no doubt she was changed—he felt that Thornton had judged rightly, and he clung to the hope, that he was not wrong in believing she still loved and suffered. In half an hour, Herbert saw Ellen leave the room; he followed to the parlour where she had left her father, knocked gently, but there was no answer; with a trembling hand he opened the door. On a low stool at her father's feet, sat Ellen, tears were on her cheek, and she had laid her weary head on his knee. He seemed to be soothing her, and regretting that he had urged her to go out that evening.

"Ellen! Let us be friends, Ellen!—and forget the miserable past;"—and Herbert was by her side. "Oh Ellen, if you can forgive—for I too have been to blame—and can love me, as once you did, we may be happy yet." Ellen's father drew the poor trembling girl into his arms, and kissed her. "Speak frankly, my daughter," he said; "if you can indeed love Herbert, it would be a happiness my old age hardly hoped for, to see you united." Ellen stood up, and extending her hand, looked on him she had loved so long and so well, and for whose dear sake she had conquered self; and though her voice faltered, there was a smile struggling through her tears as she said:—"Herbert should judge my love by his own!" and Herbert took her to his heart and called her his own for ever. When they were alone he told her Thornton's story, and such encomiums as lovers' lips so often frame, and loving woman is so glad to hear, fell sweetly on Ellen's ear. She went back to that first promise, and its disastrous conclusion, and in detailing her feelings, Miss Warrender's insinuations came to light; this reminded Herbert of his own experience, and he related the kindly efforts of that excellent lady in his behalf. "Do you not see, Herbert, how good has come out of evil! I never should have succeeded in conquering myself, but

for this frightful separation; and thus it is Providence so often permits the evil-minded to triumph, that a blessing on others, may be the result." She lifted up her earnest eyes, and Herbert thought as he looked, that life had come again into those shining orbs.

There are seasons in this world, over whose unclouded happiness there falls no shadow from the earth, when the heart goes up in gratitude to God and the mind is surrendered to the intense enjoyment of the present. Such feelings were Ellen Laning's, and oh! how the rapture of that reunion was increased by the consciousness that she *deserved* it—that her efforts had been unwearied, and had been rewarded as such self-exertion ever will be. The next day they walked some distance from the house, and unexpectedly encountered Thornton. He stared in astonishment—there was no mistaking the beaming eyes of the now happy Ellen, or the bright colour that tinged her fair cheek; gladness dwelt in her joyous smile, and the quiet happiness of a heart at rest. Herbert lifted his hat. "Good morning, Thornton; I hope you are in a better humour with me now than you were last night. Come Ellen, plead for me, he was going to blow my brains out on your account, so it is but fair that you should defend me." Ellen smiled and bowed, but she coloured deeply; she could not avoid noticing Thornton's confusion, she suspected his secret, and with a woman's tenderness she pitied. "I see I was mistaken. I leave to-night. God bless you both," and he hurried from them. It was the first woman, and the last, that ever produced any impression on the wayward, but generous heart of Edward Thornton.

Our friends returned to the city. Mr. Laning, aware of his failing health, hastened on the marriage, and Ellen consented—it was Herbert asked.

They were married; in the course of a wedding tour they passed through the village where Miss Warrender resided. She came to see them in a perfect paroxysm of delight, overwhelming Ellen with congratulations, and declaring Herbert to be a "most perfect man."

"I really cannot stand that!"—exclaimed Herbert; "no one in this world should claim perfection—unless indeed it is Miss Warrender."

"Not even your wife?" inquired Miss Warrender.

"Not even my wife,"—said Herbert looking fondly on Ellen—"she is too truly good, to make any pretension"—and he lifted her small white hand to his lips, with an expression of countenance that dwelt on Miss Warrender's memory for months. There was entire and perfect confidence between them; and Herbert Montague had given no divided love to sweet Ellen Laning.

*Harrisburg, Pa.*

## HARRY CAVENDISH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CRUISING IN THE LAST WAR," "THE REEFER OF '76," ETC. ETC.

## ELLEN NEVILLE.

WHEN I recovered my senses, after the events narrated in the last chapter, I found that I was lying in the cabin of the schooner on board which I had been serving, while a group composed of the three surgeons and several officers of the expedition stood around me. As I opened my eyes and glanced around, scarce conscious as yet of the objects that met my gaze, one of the medical men bent over me and said that my safety depended on my quiet. Gradually I imbibed the full meaning of his words, and called to mind the events immediately preceding my fall; but, in spite of his charge, I felt an uncontrollable desire to learn the extent of my injury. In a low whisper—so low indeed that I was startled at its faintness—I asked if I was seriously wounded and whether we had conquered. But he smiled as he replied,

"Not now, at least not in full, for your weakness forbids it. But the danger is over. The ball has been extracted. Quiet is all you now require."

"But," said I again, "how of our expedition? Have we conquered?"

"We have, but not a word more now. To-morrow you shall hear all. Gentlemen," he continued, turning to the group, "we had best withdraw now that our friend is past the crisis. He needs repose."

I felt the wisdom of this advice, for my brain was already whirling from the attempt to control my thoughts, even for the mere purpose of asking the questions necessary to satisfy my curiosity; so when the group left the cabin I sank back on my couch, and closing my eyes with a sense of relief, soon lost all recollection in a deep sleep, the effect, no doubt, of the opiate which had been administered to me.

When I awoke, the morning breeze was blowing freshly through the cabin, bringing with it the odors of thousands of aromatic plants from the shores of the neighboring islands, and as it wanted across my forehead, dallying with my hair and imparting a delicious coolness to the skin, I felt an invigorating, pleasurable sensation—a sensation of the most exquisite delight—such as no one can imagine who has not felt the cool breath of morning after an illness in the close cabin of a small schooner.

My curiosity to hear the events of the combat that occurred after my fall, would not suffer me to rest, and I gave my attendants no peace until I had learnt the whole.

It will be recollected that when I sank to the deck in a state of insensibility, we were engaged in a warm contest with the piratical hulk which had been moored across the mouth of the outlet from the lagoon. The fight was maintained for some time on board of the enemy, and at first with varying success; but the daring of our men at last overcame the desperate resistance of the pirates, and the enemy were either driven below, cut down, or forced overboard. This outwork, as it were, having thus been carried, we pushed on to the settlement itself, for the other vessels moored in the lagoon were by this time deserted, the pirates having retreated to a fortification on the shore, where their whole force could act together, and where they had entrenched themselves, as they vainly imagined, in an impregnable position. But our brave fellows were not intimidated. Flushed with success, and burning to revenge those of their comrades who had already fallen, they cried out to be led against the desperadoes. Accordingly, under cover of the guns of our little fleet, the men were landed, and, while a brisk fire was kept up from the vessels, the assault was made. At first the pirates stood manfully to their posts, pouring in a deadly and unrelenting fire on the assailants. In vain did the officers lead on their men three several times to the assault, for three several times were they driven back by the rattling fire of the now desperate pirates. To increase the peril of their situation, no sign of their companions in the rear had as yet appeared. The ruffians were already cheering in anticipation of a speedy victory, and our men, although still burning for vengeance, were beginning to lose all hope of victory, when the long expected rocket, announcing the arrival of the other party, shot up from the dense thicket in the rear of the fort, and instantaneously a crashing volley burst from the same quarter, followed by a long, loud cheer in which was recognised the battle shout of our comrades. The sounds shivered to the very hearts of our almost dispirited men, and added new energy to their souls and fresh vigor to their arms. Again they demanded to be led to the assault, and, with fixed bayonets, following their leader, they dashed up to the very embrasures of the fort. Then began a slaughter so terrific that the oldest veterans assured me they had never witnessed the like. Through an impervious veil of smoke, amid plunging balls and rattling grape shot, our gallant fellows

swept over the plain, through the ditch, up the embankment, and into the very heart of the fortification. At the mouths of their guns they met the pirates, bearing them bodily backwards at the point of the bayonet. But if the onslaught was determined the resistance was desperate. Every step we advanced was over the dead bodies of the foeman. Throwing away their muskets, they betook themselves to their pikes and cutlasses, and though forced to retreat by our overwhelming numbers, retreating sullenly, like a lion at bay, they marked their path with the blood of the assailants. Meanwhile the detachment of our troops in the rear, finding the defences in that quarter weaker than those in front, soon carried the entrenchments, and driving before it as well the immediate defenders of the walls, as the desperadoes who had hurried to reinforce them, it advanced with loud cheers to meet us in the centre of the fortification. Hemmed in thus on every side, the pirates saw that further resistance was useless, and were seized with a sudden panic. Some threw down their arms and cried for quarter, others cast themselves in despair on our bayonets, while a few, managing to escape by cutting their way through a part of our line, took to the swamps in the rear of the fort, whither they defied pursuit. In less than an hour from the first assault, not a pirate was left at large within the precincts of the settlement. The huts were given to the flames, and the hulk at the outlet of the lagoon scuttled and sunk. The other vessels were manned by our own forces and carried away as trophies. Thus was destroyed one of the most noted piratical haunts since the days of the Buccaneers.

We learned from the prisoners that the approach of the expedition had been detected while it was yet an hour's sail from the settlement, and that preparations had instantly been made for our repulse. Had we not been under a misapprehension as to the strength of these desperadoes, and thus been induced to take with us more than double the force we should otherwise have employed, their efforts would no doubt have been successful, since the almost impregnable nature of their defences enabled them to withstand the assault of a force four times the number of their own. It was only the opportune arrival of our comrades, and the surprise which they effected in their quarter of attack, that gave us the victory after all. As it was, our loss was terrible. We had extirpated this curse of society, but at what a price!

The wound which I had received was at first thought to be mortal, but after the extraction of the ball my case assumed a more favorable aspect. The crisis of my fate was looked for with anxiety by my comrades in arms. My return to consciousness found them, as I have described, watching that event at my bedside.

Our voyage was soon completed, and we entered the port of — amid the salvos of the batteries and the merry peals of the various convent bells. The governor came off to our fleet, almost before we had dropped our anchors, and bestowed rewards on the spot on those of his troops who had peculiarly distinguished themselves. He came at once to my cot,

and would have carried me home to the government-house, but Mr. Neville, the uncle of the fair girl whom I had saved from the desperadoes, having attended his excellency on board, insisted that I should accept the hospitalities of his home.

"Well," said his excellency, with a meaning smile, "I must give him up, for, as you say, mine is but a bachelor establishment, and hired nurses, however good, do not equal those who are actuated by gratitude. But I must insist that my own physician shall attend him."

I was still too weak to take any part in this controversy, and although I made at first a feeble objection to trespassing on Mr. Neville's kindness, he only smiled in reply, and I found myself, in less than an hour, borne to his residence, without having an opportunity to expostulate.

What a relief it is, when suffering with illness, to be transported from a close, dirty cabin to a large room and tidy accommodations! How soothing to a sick man are those thousand little conveniences and delicacies which only the hand of woman can supply, and from which the sufferer on shipboard is debarred! The well-aired bed linen; the clean and tidy apartment; the flowers placed on the stand opposite the bed; the green jalousies left half open to admit the cooling breeze; the delicious rose-water sprinkled around the room, and giving it an aromatic fragrance; and the orange, or tamarind, or other delicacy ever ready within reach to cool the fevered mouth, and remind you of the ceaseless care which thus anticipates your every want. All these, and even more, attested the kindness of my host's family. Yet everything was done in so unobtrusive a manner that, for a long while, I was ignorant to whom I was indebted for this care. I saw no one but the nurse, the physician, and Mr. and Mrs. Neville. But I could not help fancying that there were others who sometimes visited my sick chamber, although as yet I had never been able to detect them, except by the fresh flowers which they left every morning as evidences of their presence. More than once, on suddenly awaking from sleep, I fancied I heard a light footstep retreating behind my bed, and once I distinguished the tone of a low sweet voice which sounded on my ear, tired as it was of the grating accents of the nurse, like music from Paradise. Often, too, I heard, through the half open blinds that concealed the entrance to a neighboring room, the sounds of a harp accompanied by a female voice; and, at such times, keeping my eyes closed lest I should be thought awake and the singer thus be induced to stop, I have listened until my soul seemed fairly "lapped into Elysium." The memory of that ample apartment, with its spotless curtains and counterpanes, and the wind blowing freshly through its open jalousies, is as vivid in my memory to-day as it was in the hour when I lay there, listening to what seemed the seraphic music of that unseen performer. I hear yet that voice, so soft and yet so silvery, now rising clear as the note of a lark, and now sinking into a melody as liquid as that of flowing water, yet ever, in all its variations, sweet, and full, and enrapturing.

such a voice I used to dream of in childhood as belonging to the angels in heaven. Our dreams are not always wrong!

At length I was sufficiently recruited in strength to be able to sit up, and I shall ever remember the delicious emotions of the hour when I first took a seat by the casement and looked out into the garden, then fragrant with the dew of the early morning. I saw the blue sky smiling overhead, I heard the low plashing of a fountain in front of my window, I inhaled the delicate perfume wafted to me by the refreshing breeze, and as I sat there my soul ran over, as it were, with its exceeding gladness, and I almost joined my voice, from very ecstasy, with that of the birds who hopped from twig to twig, carolling their morning songs. As I sat thus looking out, I heard a light footstep on the gravel walk without, and directly the light, airy form of a young girl emerged from a secluded walk of the garden, full in my view. As she came opposite my window she looked up as if inadvertently, for, catching my eye, she blushed deeply and cast her gaze on the ground. In a moment, however, she recovered herself, and advanced in the direction she had been pursuing. The first glance at the face had revealed to me the countenance of her I had been instrumental in rescuing from the pirates. My apartment, like all those on the island, was on the ground floor, and when Miss Neville appeared she was already within a few feet of me. I rose and bowed, and noticing that she held a bunch of newly gathered flowers in her hands, I said,

"It is your taste, then, Miss Neville, which has filled the vase in my room every morning with its flowers. You cannot know how thankful I am. Ah! would that all knew with what delight a sick person gazes on flowers!"

She blushed again, and extending the bouquet to me, said with something of gaiety,

"I little thought you would be up to-day, much less at so early an hour, or perhaps I might not have gathered your flowers. Since you can gaze on them from your window they will be less attractive to you when severed, like these, from their parent stem."

"No—never," I answered warmly, "indeed your undeserved kindness, and that of your uncle and aunt, I can never forget."

She looked at me in silence with her large, full eye a moment ere she replied, and I could see that they grew humid as she gazed. Her voice, too, softened and sank almost to a whisper when at length she spoke.

"Undeserved kindness! And can we ever forget," she said, "what we owe to you?"

The words, as well as the gentle tone of reproof in which they were spoken, embarrassed me for a moment, and my eyes fell beneath her gaze. As if unwilling further to trust her emotions, she turned hastily away as she finished. When I looked up she was gone.

We met daily after this. The *ennui* of a convalescent made me look forward to the time she spent with me as if it constituted my whole day. Cer-

tainly the room seemed less cheerful after her departure. Often would I read while she sat sewing. At other times we indulged in conversation, and I found Miss Neville's information on general subjects so extensive as sometimes to put me to the blush. She had read not only the best authors of our own language, but also those of France, and her remarks proved that she had thought while she read. She was a passionate admirer of music, and herself a finished performer. For all that was beautiful in nature she had an eye and soul. There was a dash of gaiety in her disposition, although, perhaps, her general character was sedate, and late events had if anything increased its prominent trait. Her tendency to a gentle melancholy—if I may use the phrase—was perceptible in her choice of favorite songs. More than once, when listening to the simple ballads she delighted to sing, have I caught the tears rolling down my cheeks, so unconsciously had I been subdued by the pathos of her voice and song.

In a few days I was sufficiently convalescent to leave my room, and thenceforth I established myself in the one from which I had heard the mysterious music. This apartment proved to be a sort of boudoir appropriated to the use of Miss Neville, and it was her performance on the harp that I had heard during my sickness. Hers too had been the figure which I had seen once or twice flitting out of sight on my awaking from a fevered sleep.

It is a dangerous thing when two young persons, of different sexes, are thrown together in daily intercourse, especially when one, from his very situation, is forced to depend on the other for the amusement of hours that would otherwise hang heavily on him. The peril is increased when either party is bound to the other by any real or fancied ties of gratitude. But during the first delicious fortnight of convalescence I was unconscious of this danger, and without taking any thought of the future I gave myself wholly up to the enjoyment of the hour. For Miss Neville I soon came to entertain a warm sentiment of regard, yet my feelings for her were of a far different nature from those I entertained for Annette. I did not, however, stop to analyze them, for I saw, or thought I saw, that the pleasure I felt in Ellen's society was mutual, and I inquired no further. Alas! it never entered into my thoughts to ask whether, while I contented myself with friendship, she might not be yielding to a warmer sentiment. Had I been more vain perhaps this thought might have occurred to me. But I never imagined—blind fool that I was—that this constant intercourse betwixt us could endanger the peace of either. If I could, I would have coined my heart's blood sooner than have won the love which I could not return. Yet such was my destiny. My eyes were opened at length to the consequences of my indiscretion.

We had been conversing one day of the expected arrival of *THE ARROW*, and I had spoken enthusiastically of my profession, and, perhaps, expressed some restlessness at the inactive life I was leading, when I noticed that Ellen sighed, looked more closely

at her work, and remained silent for some time. At length she raised her eyes, however, and said,

"How can you explain the passion which a seaman entertains for his ship? One would think that your hearts indulged in no other sentiment than this engrossing one."

"You wrong us, indeed, Ellen," I said, "for no one has a warmer heart than the sailor. But we have shared so many dangers with our ship, and it has been to us so long almost our only world, that we learn to entertain a sort of passion for it, which, I confess, seems a miracle to others, but which to us is perfectly natural. I love the old *ARROW* with a sentiment approaching to monomania, and yet I have many and dear friends whom I love none the less for this passion."

I saw that her bosom heaved quicker than usual at these words, and she plied her needle with increased velocity. Had I looked more narrowly, I might have seen the color faintly coming and going in her cheek, and almost heard her heart beating in the audible silence. But I still was blind to the cause of this emotion. By some unaccountable impulse I was led to speak of a subject which I had always avoided, though not intentionally—my early intimacy with Annette, and her subsequent rescue from the brig. Secure, as I thought, of the sympathy of my listener, and carried away by my engrossing love for Annette, I dwelt on her story for some time, totally unconscious of the effect my words were producing on Ellen. My infatuation on that morning seems now incredible. As I became more earnest with my subject, I noticed still less the growing agitation of my listener, and it was not until I was in the midst of a sentence in which I paused for words to express the loveliness of Annette's character, that I saw that Ellen was in tears. She was bending low over her work so as to conceal her agitation from my eye, but as I hesitated in my glowing description, a bright tear-drop fell on her lap. The truth broke on me like a flash of lightning. I saw it all as clear as by a noonday sun, and I wondered at my former blindness. I was stung to the heart by what I had just been saying, for what agony it must have inflicted on my hearer! I felt my situation to be deeply embarrassing, and broke short off in my sentence. After a moment, however, feeling that silence was more oppressive than anything else, I made a desperate effort and said,

"Ellen!"

It was a single word, and one which I had addressed to her a hundred times before; but perhaps there was something in the tone in which I spoke it, that revealed what was passing in my mind, for, as she heard her name, the poor girl burst into a flood of tears, and covering her face with her hands she rushed from the room. She felt that her secret was disclosed. She loved one whose heart was given to another.

That day I saw her no more. But her agony of mind could not have been greater than my own. There is no feeling more acute to a sensitive mind than the consciousness that we are beloved by one

whom we esteem, but whose affection it is impossible for us to requite. Oh! the bitter torture to reflect that by this inability to return another's love, we are inflicting on them the sharpest of all disappointments, and perhaps embittering their life. Point me out a being who is callous to such a feeling, and I will point you out a wretch who is unworthy of the name of man. He who can triumph in the petty vanity of being loved by one for whom he entertains no return of affection, is worse than a fop or a fool—he is a scoundrel of the worst stamp. He deserves that his home should be uncheered by a woman's smiles, that his dying hour should be a stranger to her tender care. God knows! to her we are indebted for all the richest blessings and holiest emotions of our life. While we remember that we drank in our life from a mother's breast—that we owed that life a thousand times afterwards to a mother's care—that the love of a sister or the deeper affection of a wife has cheered us through many a dark hour of despair, we can never join that flippant school which makes light of a woman's truth, or follow those impious revilers who would sneer at a woman's love. The green sod grows to-day over many a lovely, fragile being, who might still have been living but for the perfidy of our sex. There is no fiction in the oft-told story of a broken heart. It is, perhaps, a consumption that finally destroys the victim, but alas! the barb that infused the poison first into the frame was—a hopeless love. How many fair faces have paled, how many hearts have grown cold, how many seraphic forms have passed, like angel visitants, from the earth, and few have known the secret of the blight that so mysteriously and suddenly withered them away. Alas! there is scarcely a village churchyard in the land, in which some broken hearted one does not sleep all forgotten in her lonely bed. The grave is a melancholy home; but it has hope for the distressed: there, at least, the weary are at rest.

It is years since I have visited the grave of ELLEN, and I never think of her fate without tears coming into my eyes.

I said I saw her no more that day. When I descended to the breakfast table on the following morning, I looked around, and, not beholding her, was on the point of inquiring if she was ill; but, at the instant, the door opened and one of my old messmates appeared, announcing to me that *THE ARROW* was in the offing, where she awaited me—he having been despatched with a boat to bring me on board. As I had been expecting her arrival for several days, there was little preparation necessary before I was ready to set forth. My traps had been already despatched when I stood in the hall to take leave of the family. My thoughts, at this moment, recurred again to Ellen, and I was, a second time, on the point of asking for her, when she appeared. I noticed that she looked pale, and I thought seemed as if she had been weeping. Her aunt said,

"I knew Ellen had a violent headach, but when I found that you were going, Mr. Cavendish, I thought she could come down for a last adieu."

I bowed, and taking Miss Neville's hand raised it to my lips. None there were acquainted with our secret but ourselves, yet I felt as if every eye was on me, and from the nervous trembling of Ellen's fingers, I knew that her agitation was greater than my own.

"God bless you, dear Miss Neville," I said, and, in spite of my efforts, my voice quivered, "and may your days be long and happy."

As I dropped her hand, I raised my eyes a moment to her face. That look of mute thankfulness, and yet of mournful sorrow, I never shall forget. I felt that she saw and appreciated my situation, and that even thus her love was made evident. If I had doubted, her words would have relieved me.

"Farewell!" she said, in a voice so low that no one heard it but myself. "I do not blame you. God be with you!"

The tears gushed to her eyes, and my own heart was full to overflowing. I hastily waved my hand—for I had already taken leave of the rest—sprang into the carriage, rode in silence to the quay, and throwing myself into the stern sheets of the barge, sat, wrapt in my own emotions and without speaking a word, until we reached the ship. That night I early sought my hammock; and there prayed long and earnestly for Ellen.

The memory of that long past time crowds on me to-night, and I feel it would be a relief to me to disburthen my full heart of its feelings. I will finish this melancholy story.

It was a short six months after my departure from Mr. Neville's hospitable mansion, when we came to anchor again in the port, with a couple of rich prizes, which we had taken a short time before, in the Gulf Stream. The first intelligence I heard, on landing, was that Miss Neville was said to be dying of a consumption. Need I say that a pang of keenest agony shot through my heart? A something whispered to me that I was the cause, at least partially, of all this. With a faltering tongue I inquired the particulars. They were soon told. I subsequently learned more, and shall conceal nothing.

From the day when I left —, the health of Ellen had begun gradually to droop. At first her friends noticed only that she was less gay than usual, and once or twice they alluded jestingly to me as the secret of her loss of spirits. But when the expression of agony, which at such times would flit across her face, was noticed, her friends ceased their allusions. Meanwhile her health began sensibly to be affected. She ate little. She slept in fitful dozes. No amusement could drive away the settled depression which seemed to brood upon her spirits. Her friends resorted to everything to divert her mind, but all was in vain. With a sad, sweet smile, she shook her head at their efforts, as if she felt that they could do nothing to reach her malady.

At length she caught a slight cold. She was of a northern constitution, and when this cold was followed by a permanent cough, her friends trembled lest it foreboded the presence of that disease, which annually sweeps off its thousands of the beautiful

and gay. Nor were they long in doubt. Their worst fears were realized. CONSUMPTION had fixed its iron clutch on her heart, and was already tugging at its life-strings. The worm was gnawing at the core of the flower, and the next rough blast would sweep it from the stalk. As day by day passed, she drew nearer to the grave. Her eye grew sunken, but an unnatural lustre gleamed from its depths—the hectic flush blazed on her cheek—and that dry hacking cough, which so tortures the consumptive, while it snaps chord after chord of life, hourly grew worse.

At an early period of Ellen's illness, Mrs. Neville, who had been to the orphan girl a second mother, divined the secret of her niece's malady. She did not, however, urge her confidence on her charge, but Ellen soon saw that her aunt knew all. There was a meaning in her studied avoidance of my name, which could not be mistaken. Ellen's heart was won by this delicacy, until, one day, she revealed everything. Mrs. Neville pressed her to her bosom at the close of the confession, and, though nothing was said, Ellen felt that the heart of her second mother bled for her.

As death drew nearer, Ellen's thoughts became gradually freed from this world. But she had still one earthly desire—she wished to see me before she died. Only to Mrs. Neville, however, was this desire confided, and even then without any expectation that it could be gratified. When, however, THE ARROW stopped so opportunely in —, her petitions became so urgent, that Mrs. Neville sent for me. With a sad heart I obeyed her summons.

"The dear girl," she said, when she met me in the ante-room, "would not be denied, and, indeed, I had not the heart to refuse her. Oh! Mr. Cavendish, you will find her sadly changed. These are fearful trials which God, in his good providence, has called us to undergo," and tears choked her further utterance. I was scarcely less affected.

It would be a fruitless task in me to attempt to describe my emotions on entering the chamber of the dying girl. I have no recollection of the furniture of the room, save that it was distinguished by the exquisite neatness and taste which always characterized Ellen. My eyes rested only on one object—the sufferer herself.

She was reclining on a couch, her head propped up with pillows, and her right hand lying listlessly on the snowy counterpane. How transparent that hand seemed, with the blue veins so distinctly seen through the skin that you could almost mark the pulsation of the blood beneath. But it was her countenance which most startled me. When I last saw her—save at that one parting interview—her mild blue orbs smiled with a sunniness that spoke the joy of a young and happy heart. Now the wild hectic of consumption blazed on her cheek, and her eyes had a brilliancy and lustre that were not of earth. Then, her rich golden tresses floated in wavy curls across her shoulders—now, that beautiful hair was gathered up under the close-fitting cap which she wore. Then her face was bright with the glow of

health—alas! now it was pale and attenuated. But in place of her faded loveliness had come a more glorious beauty; and the glad smile of old had given way to one of seraphic sweetness. When she extended her wan hand toward me, and spoke in that unrivalled voice which, though feeble, was like the symphony of an *Æolian* harp, it seemed, to my excited fancy, as if an angel from heaven had welcomed me to her side.

"This is a sad meeting," she said; for my emotions, at the sight of her changed aspect, would not permit me to speak—"but why grieve? It is all for the best. It might seem unmaidenly to some," she continued, with a partial hesitation, while, if possible, a brighter glow deepened on her cheek, "for me thus to send for you; but I trust we know each other's hearts, and this is no time to bow to the formalities of life. I feel that I am dying."

"Say not so, dear Ellen," I gasped, while my frame shook with agony at the ruin I had brought about—"oh! say not so. You will yet recover. God has many happy years in store for you."

"No, no," she said touchingly, "this world is not for me; I am but a poor bruised reed—it were better I were cast aside. But weep not, for oh! I meant not to upbraid you. No, never, even in my first agony, have I blamed *you*—and it was to tell you this that I prayed I might survive. Yes! dearest—for it cannot be wrong now to confess my love—I would not that you should suppose I condemned you even in thought. You saved my life—and I loved you before I knew it myself. You weep—I know you do not despise me—had we met under better auspices, the result might have been—" here her voice choked with emotion—"might have been different." I could only press her hand. "Oh! this is bliss," she murmured, after a pause. "But it was not so to be," she added, in a moment, with a saddened tone, which cut me to the heart. "I should love to see her of whom you speak—she is very beautiful, is she not? In heaven the angels are all beautiful." Her mind wandered. "I have heard their music

for days, and every day it is clearer and lovelier. Hear!" and with her finger raised, her eye fixed on the air, and a rapt smile on her radiant countenance, she remained a moment silent.

Tears fell from us like rain. But by and bye, her wandering senses returned; and a look of unutterable woe passed over her face. Oh! how my heart bled. I know not what I said; I only know that I strove to soothe the dying moments of that sweet saint, so suffering, yet so forgiving. A look of happiness once more lightened up her face, and, with a sweet smile, she talked of happiness and heaven. As we thus communed, our hearts were melted. Gradually her voice assumed a different tone, becoming sweeter and more liquid at every word, while her eyes shone no longer with that fitful lustre, but beamed on me the full effulgence of her soul once more.

"Raise me up," she said. I passed my arm around her, and gently lifted her up. Her head reposed on my shoulder, while her hand was still clasped in mine. She turned her blue eyes on me with a seraphic expression, such as only the sainted soul in its parting moment can embody, and whispered—

"Oh! to die thus is sweet! Henry, dear Henry—God bless you! In heaven there is no sorrow," and then, in incoherent sentences, she murmured of bright faces, and strange music, and glorious visions that were in the air. The dying musician said that he then knew more of God and nature than he ever knew before, and it may be, that, as the soul leaves the body, we are gifted with a power to see things of which no mortal here can tell. Who knows? In our dying hour we shall learn.

The grave of Ellen is now forgotten by all, save me. The grass has grown over it for long years. But often, in the still watches of the night, I think I hear a celestial voice whispering in my ear; and sometimes, in my dreams, I behold a face looking, as it were, from amid the stars: and that face, all glorious in light, is as the face of that sainted girl. I cannot believe that the dead return no more.



Original.

## ANNETTE DELANCY.

BY F. A. DURIVAGE.

## CHAPTER I.—A DEATH-BED.

A GLOOMY night in November was setting in upon the town of Ramvilliers, in France. The rain fell in torrents, and the wind, blowing in fitful gusts, rattled fearfully the antique casements of a venerable house in the suburbs, against the roof of which the huge bare branches of a plane tree beat incessantly. And in a lone chamber of that desolate mansion lay an old man upon his death-bed. The curtains of the bedstead were drawn aside, for the sufferer gasped for breath, and, as his filmy eyes roved from object to object, he muttered something about the gathering darkness, and desired the female attendant to bring more candles. His nurse was a woman somewhat past the middle age, strong and healthy, whose fine personal appearance, and dark and decided countenance, offered a painful contrast to the wasted form and sallow features of the man who was fast passing away from the stage of existence.

"Annette not come yet," inquired the sufferer, in a weak and querulous tone. "I cannot last much longer and I must see the child before I die. Hark! was 'nt that the rattling of carriage-wheels?"

"Ay, ay—like enough," muttered the dying man. "That tree was planted on my birth-day. I loved it well, and I could not bear to lop a single limb from its majestic stem. But what matters it? When I am laid low, the axe will do its duty. But the child, Gertrude, did you indeed send for her?" he inquired, raising himself painfully in the bed, and fixing his darkening eyes upon the attendant.

"Did I send for her, M. Delancy? Certainly I did, and it is time she were here. Your interest in that girl seems to increase as your time shortens. From the hour you brought her home, six years ago, you seem to have been wrapped up in her welfare. Truly your deceased sister could not have left her in better hands. You have done well by your niece."

"Gertrude!" cried the dying man, "she is *not* my niece—she is my child, my only child!"

"I suspected this long ago," muttered Gertrude to herself.

"Hear me!" cried the dying man, rallying his energies, with what seemed to be a last effort. "Twelve years ago, when I was poor and struggling with the world, I met the mother of Annette. She was poor as myself, but of her loveliness and worth I need not, cannot speak. We have parted—*was it not for ever?* I swore to make her mine, but the demon of self-interest led me to wrong her. All my worldly expectations were based upon the favor of a rich uncle, who had formed ambitious views for me in life. To have made a *mésalliance*, would have ruined me in his estimation for ever. So, though I married the mother of Annette, it was in secret. The pangs of concealment preyed upon her gentle soul, yet did I not repent until

the death-blow was stricken and I followed her corpse to an untimely grave. My uncle died; but with the caprice of a miser, he left all his wealth—that wealth for which I had bartered my peace, and the life of the only being who ever loved me—to a distant relative. I struggled on to a moderate competence, but the memory of the past has overshadowed my life like a cloud, and it hangs now, gloomy and dark, over my death-bed, and blots out my hopes of a future. But my child—it is not too late to make reparation to her. The accursed pride which has ever held me back when I would have stepped forward to do justice to the living and the dead, has now, in my last hour, decided me. Hear me, Gertrude, and if you fail to do my behest, the curse of a dying man cling to you through life and choke your dying prayer! May your death-bed be as desolate and dark as mine. My breath is failing fast, but hear me. In yonder escritoire, at the back of the right-hand drawer, is a spring, press it and a secret receptacle will disclose itself—in it you will find two papers, one, a document authenticating my marriage, the other a will in favor of Annette. Possess yourself of these and see them duly registered—executed. Clutch them as if your life depended on your fidelity; do this, and my blessing, the blessing of all good angels be upon your head. I can say no more—the room grows dark and close. More light, more light! Stay—I shall soon have light enough. But Annette—where is she? Oh! for one parting glance at her sweet face! But it is too late—all is dark—oh, God! I am dying—"

He fell back heavily upon his pillow, the rattle sounded hoarsely in his throat, and the man of this world had passed away to the mysterious next. No gentle hand closed his eyes upon their last slumber, and they remained wide open, gazing fearfully in the direction of the escritoire. The cold and worldly woman was alone in the apartment. The fire burned fitfully upon the hearth-stone, and the light played flickeringly upon the face of the dead. Now it seemed as if a frown passed over the yellow countenance, but all was still and motionless.

"Fool," muttered the housekeeper. "Did you think I toiled for you year after year for the sake of the paltry wages your avarice afforded me, or for the interest I took in your well-being? And did you think your last will and testament was to supplant that in my favor, which I made you sign in a moment of delirium! Shall this child of thy folly be reared on the money I destined for my own? Never! But I must be quick, the notary will be here anon, and the time for action is of the briefest."

She hastened to the escritoire, opened it, and drew forth the papers, substituting a document which she took from her bosom. She then relocked the receptacle, and sat down to the perusal of the papers. After she had read them she held them to the lamp, and the flame was on the point of consuming them, when a sudden noise in the street caused her to stop. Looking up, she fancied she saw the eyes of the dead glaring upon her with a look of fearful menace.

"I cannot destroy them!" she muttered; "I will

keep them, but so safely, that no one but myself shall ever dream of their existence." And concealing them in her dress, she went to the window and saw a carriage draw up to the door. "It is Mademoiselle Annette," she muttered to herself. "Ten minutes sooner, and perhaps my own child would have been a beggar."

#### CHAPTER II.—A DECIDED STEP—NEW FRIENDS.

The funeral of M. Delaney was conducted with appropriate solemnity, and the notary of the village, having discovered the will which Madame Bonand had deposited in the *escritoire*, it was duly read to the assembled mourners. It was found that the small property of the deceased had been bequeathed to his faithful housekeeper, on whom it was enjoined to rear Annette with care and kindness. The decent grief of the lady and the kindness she bestowed upon the little girl in public, sufficiently proved the judgment of the testator, and the villagers departed from the house of mourning to disseminate praises of the good housekeeper throughout the circle of their acquaintance. But when a few weeks had elapsed, poor Annette was made to experience the bitter change which had come upon her fortunes. The housekeeper was unkind and harsh, and upheld her daughter, Juliette, in the perpetration of every petty tyranny upon her little charge. The most disagreeable tasks were imposed upon her, and she was forced to eat her scanty and hardly-earned meals in utter loneliness. Her complaints, which were indeed few and only extorted by the hardest usage, were uttered to deaf ears, and Juliette finally completed her unkindness by striking the little orphan. The natural spirit of the poor child rose at this intolerable insult. Yet she smothered her indignant feelings, and for a day or two went about her tasks with her usual silent industry. But she had arrived at a crisis of her destiny—she had endured, until endurance was no longer a virtue, and she had resolved upon her course. The child of eleven years had learned to think.

It was a wild and stormy evening, Madame Bonand with her daughter, and a few friends, were making merry in the best room of the old mansion, when little Annette, with a single change of clothing, and a few provisions in a small hand-basket, tied on her cloak and bonnet, and issuing stealthily from the back gate of the garden, bade fare well for ever to the dwelling of her late protector. She took her way directly to the little village church which raised its grey spire towards the frowning heavens, across the face of which the rack and mists were hurrying fitfully. She passed through the ruinous gateway of the churchyard and paused by a recently erected monument. As she scattered a handful of flowers on the marble slab, the moon broke forth from the grey clouds and poured down a flood of light upon the child and the cenotaph.

"The quiet grave!" she muttered, with a tone of deep feeling, as if it were suddenly matured by the hour

and the scene. "I ought not to weep because my good uncle is sleeping there quietly, for the Curé has taught me that the good lie down to wake among angels. But I cannot lie there by his side, for life is before me—a weary life—for now my uncle is gone, who will take care of poor Annette?" The iron tongue of the clock, striking the hour of ten, roused her from the task of contemplation. "I must make haste!" she cried, gathering up her basket hastily, as the thought of pursuit intruded upon her mind, "or they may overtake me and bring me back to that fearful scene of suffering."

Poor child! little did you think how lightly those heartless beings you had left would think of the sufferings of the poor wayfarer thus early thrust forth upon the world to struggle for existence. For a mile or two the child ran onward with the utmost speed, not daring to cast a look behind at the misty spire and the wintry tree-tops of Ramvilliers. Weariness at length came upon her and she cast her eyes around in the hope of discovering a shelter for the night. Nothing better offered than a half-ruinous outhouse the appendage of a deserted building, through the crannies of which, the night wind whistled with a mournful melody. A little heap of straw lay in the corner, and this was to be the couch of one whom, a short time back, "the winds of heaven were not permitted to visit too roughly." Concealing her precious basket, and offering her guileless prayer to heaven, she threw herself upon the straw, and never did sleep come to her more quickly when sheltered by the roof of her kind protector. She did not awake until sunrise, and starting up, she smiled at the pleasant aspect of the country, seen through the unprotected door-way of her humble lodging-house. It was a fine frosty morning, and her young blood danced merrily through her veins. In high glee, she resumed the road, and after walking several miles, sat down by the sunny side of a wood and opened her scanty store of provisions. She was so deeply engaged in her meal, that she did not notice the approach of a foot traveller until his jovial "holloa!" sounded close to her ear and compelled her to look up. Already an acute physiognomist, she scanned his features intently. He was a stout sunburnt man, clothed in a coarse grey cloth, evidently the garb of a farmer, and carried a stout cudgel in his hand.

"Well, my pretty lass," inquired the stout pedestrian, "what are you doing here?"

"Eating my breakfast, as you see, sir," was the quiet answer.

"And you seem to have a deuced good appetite. But where do you come from?"

"From a place I never wish to see again."

"Well, but where are you going?"

"I don't know."

"Somewhat sharp for her years," muttered the farmer to himself. "Has no idea of trusting a stranger too far. However, I like her the better for that."

"Don't you want some breakfast?" inquired Annette, offering him a large piece of cake.

"Thank ye, but I never take the road so early without

laying in a good stock of provender. Many thanks to you, however."

Annette now put up her basket, and, having broken the ice, proceeded to question her acquaintance in turn.

"Where do you come from?"

"Umph! I might answer as cautiously as yourself, my child. But Pierre Beauchamp has no secrets, thank God! I've been to the South of France to secure a legacy left me by an old uncle. And I'm going back to Bondy, where I live. I've been gone three weeks, and I'm impatient to get home."

"Ah! how glad you'll be to see your wife and children."

"Yes, glad enough to see my wife," answered the good Pierre; but he paused before he continued, in a tone of regret, "as for children, my pretty one, I have none to welcome me."

Annette was silent for a while. "Is Bondy far from Rainvilliers?"

"Ay, ay, a long way, my child. But why do you ask? Come, tell me all," continued the good-natured farmer, seating himself beside the child, and taking her tiny hand in his own huge brown palm. "Something must have gone wrong to send such a tender little chicken as yourself abroad so early of a winter's day. Come, now, I'm your friend, little one, and if you stand in need of one, I'll be a father to you."

A tone of kindness was the key to Annette's heart. Her pent-up feelings found vent in a flood of such tears as childhood only sheds, and then, with the confidence of an innocent heart, she recounted her little history, that, simple as it was, touched the soul of the good Pierre. With a delicacy hardly to be looked for, she concealed the names of the actors in the brief drama of her life.

"God bless you!" cried the farmer, taking the child in his arms. "This is a fortunate hour for both of us. You are just such a little girl as I have sighed to call mine. My dame will be right glad to receive me. Only come with me, my darling, and you shall be my child."

"Shall I, indeed?" exclaimed Annette. "But those bad persons who have injured me?"

"Only let 'em darken my doors!" shouted Pierre, as he grasped his sturdy cudgel, "and I'll—" though he prudently left the sentence unfinished, the expression of his countenance was very satisfactory. "But, come, we must be stirring, child. At the next cross road we shall meet the diligence, if we make good speed."

"What! are we going to ride in a nice carriage?" cried the child.

"Ay, ay, a nice carriage that goes three miles an hour and be hanged to it," replied the farmer. "But that's nothing to the way my long-tailed Normandy mare shall whisk us over the ground when we get home. And you shall have a nice little pony to ride on—and my wife will be so glad to see you—and old Agatha—and Cesar, my old dog—capital fellow—and the ducks and pigs, and chickens—come along!"

And seizing the willing hand of Annette, the jolly farmer strode along the highway, chuckling boisterously

all the while, with an occasional flourish of his oaken cudgel, and one or two cumbrous attempts at pirouetting, to the infinite delight of his little companion, who considered him the funniest old gentleman in boots she had ever seen.

The diligence met them at the cross road, and little Annette continued to be delighted with her new friend. Moreover, at the hotel where they dined, she formed a new acquaintance. This was a lad of fourteen, travelling to Paris with a servant of his father, to enter one of the metropolitan seminaries. Eugene de Merville was a lively youth, who showed our heroine and her protector some civilities, and they were soon intimate. In half an hour they had related their little histories like children in a fairy tale, and when Eugene mounted his horse he took a very romantic leave of Annette, and promised to come and see them at the farm-house of Bondy, much to the delight of the hospitable Pierre.

The sun had nearly touched the verge of the horizon, when Pierre shouted to the conductor of the diligence to stop, and alighting with his charge, pointed out a farm-house on the edge of an extensive wood.

"Look up, Annette!" he cried, "there is your home, and here comes my dame, and Cesar too. How are you old fellow?" he exclaimed, as a huge wolf-dog bounded towards him, and expressed his joy at the meeting, by a thousand rough gambols. "Annette and you must be play-fellows. He's rough and honest like myself, child."

As he finished these words he was locked in the embraces of his happy help-mate, from which he freed himself with a hearty kiss on both her cheeks.

"Look here, dame, isn't she a pretty creature. You must be kind to her, for I love her already like a child."

The good woman held out her arms with a smile, and Annette sprang to her embrace. Long and lovingly was she caressed, while the sturdy farmer looked on with a smile and a tear.

"Come, come, Annette," he cried at length, "you are taking more than your share. I shall be jealous of you, little puss."

The child quitted the arms of the female, and holding a hand of each of her new protectors, tripped gaily between them to the farm-house. The orphan had found a home.

## CHAPTER III.—THE QUEST—FIRST LOVE.

Five years—a long time to the weary and world-forsaken, had rolled over the heads of the peaceful inmates of the farm-house at Bondy. The playful girl of eleven had grown up to the grace and bloom of sweet sixteen, still playful and pure as in her earliest days, with warm feelings and a cultivated mind, the idol of her rustic friends, and the light of her rural dwelling. Pierre loved to gaze upon her blooming cheek, and clear blue eyes, and swore that the music of her silver singing laugh, was more melodious than the song of the lark or the nightingale. The long winter evenings were cheered by her mirth, or enlivened by her reading and her conversation. The very birds blessed her presence,

and old Agatha, the attached domestic of the family, smiled more frequently than she was wont, at the sprightly sallies of the adopted child. She declared at the same time that the rustic couple were spoiling her, and giving her an education far beyond her station. What was the use of her singing, and embroidering, and painting and foreign languages. Better make cheese and butter, and understand cooking and washing. But Annette was one of those happy beings who can take a great deal of spoiling, and, while she neglected not her domestic duties, insisted upon her right to certain accomplishments, and there was none but Agatha to gainsay. Even the latter relented somewhat, when, devoted to the task of pleasing her, Annette would warble some old Provençal lay, which she had caught up from the old woman, and embellished with her fine musical taste, till it caught a thousand new graces from her voice and style. On these occasions the old woman would wipe her spectacles, and clear her husky voice, and declare that little Miss Annette had really a fine voice and taste, and sang very well the songs she taught her, though the music master would be the spoiling of her. And with this little salvo to her vanity, her objections would cease for the time.

One pleasant summer morning, when the birds were abroad and musical on every bough, a solitary horseman was seen upon an eminence in the road, engaged in conversation with a peasant, while he pointed occasionally with a whip to the farm-house, which he seemed to reconnoitre from afar. At length, putting spurs to his horse, he galloped up to the grange, and reining in his foaming steed before the gate, alighted. Old Cæsar, the watch-dog, did not receive him with his customary incivility, but even saluted him by a wag of the tail and demurely followed his footsteps into the house.

The stranger was a dark-haired, handsome young man of nineteen, with the air and dress of a finished gentleman, but with nothing of an aristocratic hauteur in his manners. Annette was in the hall when he arrived. The young man sprang forward and caught her by the hand, while she drew back, blushing and astonished.

"What!" cried the stranger, "have five years wrought such a change in my appearance, that you have forgotten Eugene De Merville?"

"M. De Merville!" cried Annette, with a little coquetry in her air. "Ah! I remember now. I met you once before at the inn where the diligence stopped with my—my father, on the road to Bondy."

"Yes, mademoiselle, the very same. You were very communicative then—not at all reserved. You are of course, somewhat altered in that respect, but I am afraid that I am the same—still the same careless, idle *vaurlin* that I was then. However, I have neither forgotten you nor your invitation, and behold me here after a lapse of five years, to redeem my promise."

Here Pierre entered on the scene and grasped the visitor warmly by the hand.

"I see you have not forgotten me, my old friend," cried De Merville, gaily, as he returned the hospitable pressure. "And this, I presume, is your lady. Permit me to salute her."

Annette had disappeared. Was it to arrange her dress?

"I'm delighted to see you," cried the farmer. "Here, Jean, Martin, Eustace, some of you, take care of the gentleman's horse. Walk in, M. De Merville, and be seated. I hope you've come to spend six months at least."

De Merville smiled. "I shall not put your hospitality to too severe a test," he replied. "I can make you but a short visit. The health of my only surviving parent is precarious, and now that my education is complete, I must devote the greater portion of my time to the grateful task of being a companion to him in his solitary chateau."

"Well, be that as it may, you shall enjoy yourself while you stay," said the farmer. "There's glorious fishing in the neighborhood, and plenty of shooting in the forest. My sporting days are not over yet, and I can handle the gun and rod with something of my former skill. The time shall not hang idle on your hands, believe me."

In a few moments, Annette re-appeared, her exceeding loveliness partially heightened by the rustic finery in which she had dressed herself in honor to their distinguished guest. Eugene was charmed and astonished to find that her mind had been so highly cultivated, and when in the evening, her musical talents were called into requisition, he could not repress his delight at her performances. Accustomed to the brilliant and too-highly cultivated strains of the salons of Paris, he was astonished at the effect produced by simple and natural means, and her Provençal ballads pleased him much more than the bravuras to which he had so long been forced to listen. At the close of her songs he was rapturous in his expressions of applause.

"Very fair, very fair indeed," said Agatha, "though it ill becomes me to say, for I taught it to Mademoiselle myself."

"Indeed?" exclaimed the young man, gravely. "If then, the execution of the pupil is so brilliant, what must be that of the preceptress. If you could be prevailed upon to favor us, madame, I should esteem it the greatest obligation."

Agatha coughed, and excused herself on account of a hoarseness, while Pierre throw himself back in his chair and laughed heartily.

"Come, dame," he cried, "strike up, and *parbleu!* I'll accompany you upon the tongs and shovel, as they do in Flanders. Ah! M. De Merville, you ought to hear her sing—the ravens hang their heads for very shame, and old Cæsar howls as if he had been shot—runs away into the forest, and we don't see any thing of him again for a month."

"For shame, father," cried Annette, "you do the good Agatha very great injustice. She only speaks the truth when she says she taught me all Provençal songs."

"And if so," replied De Merville, "we are all indebted to her for the delight of this evening."

This turn in the conversation was infinitely gratifying to old Agatha, who, on taking leave of Annette that night at her chamber door, was very warm in her praises.

of De Merville. "A young man," she said, "after her own heart—not one of your harum scarum young fellows, who think a woman *passé* at thirty—a good discerning young gentleman with all the true politeness of the *ancien régime*."

"And you must be an excellent judge," replied Annette, "for I dare say you had a good chance to play the critic, for you must have been surrounded by suitors in the days you speak of."

"Ah! Mademoiselle, it is no use speaking of them," said the old woman, with a shake of the head, "but I had partners enough at every fête I attended—and, between ourselves, if I had listened to the advice of my friends, I might have been now—"

"A notary's wife?" inquired Annette.

"Better than that," replied the old woman. "A notary's widow." And with a chuckling laugh she hobbled away to her dormitory.

What visions flitted through the head of Annette as she laid her tresses on her pillow that night, I will not pretend to say; but I am very sure that Eugene De Merville thought of her to the last of his waking moments.

"She is lovely as a houri," said he, "and her mind is as pure and bright as her person. But what am I or what can I do to render myself acceptable to such a being."

How long does the humility of a young gentleman of great personal attraction and accomplishment last in such a case? My lady readers may reply.

Eugene De Merville arose at an early hour the next morning, and I cannot conceal the circumstance that his toilette was made with rather more than his customary care. Annette, too, met him at the breakfast-table upon equal terms, for she was bent upon playing the hostess to her first guest with all due honor to the part she had undertaken. The meal went through merrily, and, that concluded, the good Pierre insisted upon taking De Merville over his farm, while, not to be behind hand in civility, Eugene was very lavish in his praises of the turnips, corn, potatoes, and poultry. With dinner came another chat with Annette, and then an afternoon's shooting. Moonlight and music made a delightful finale to the day, and this may be taken as a sketch of the daily life the young Frenchman led for a brief delicious period. I ought to add, that he very soon found out that Annette was a capital horseman, and so he very speedily challenged her to an exhibition of her equestrian accomplishments, which resulted in a long but not wearisome gallop over many a mile of hill and dale. Nor was this a solitary excursion—for he appeared to experience a suddenly and unaccountable curiosity to visit every picturesque *locale* in the neighborhood, and as he was a perfect stranger to the place, it was of course very proper for the young lady to do her best to prevent his getting lost in the by-roads and quiet paths of the vicinity. Ah! those are very dangerous expeditions for the susceptible. The gallantries of assisting to mount and dismount are so fascinating. I have little fear of a brushing gallop, but when the horses and their riders are tired of hard galloping, when the soothing twilight hour is ap-

proaching, and the steeds instinctively approach each other and the ear is inclined, that the regular beat of the hoof may not interrupt the subdued conversation, "somehow or other" that conversation is apt to take a very interesting turn, and afterwards, when the welcome home is reached, the hand of the Cavalier is very apt to grasp the fair fingers of his companion, as he assists her from the saddle, with a more than necessary pressure; and how can those fair fingers be withdrawn without imminent peril to the lady? Believe me, love seats himself as often in the saddle as in the *fauteuil*, and I am not sure that he ought not to be depicted as a diminutive jockey, with most exquisite top-boots and a beautiful little riding-whip. But this is a digression.

Then there were rambles after wild-flowers in the pleasant glades of the woodland, which possessed even a greater charm for Eugene than the more active excursions on horseback. And did this unchecked intimacy arise and continue without any detriment to Annette's peace of mind? Was the form and memory of Eugene De Merville to pass away like the feeble image of a dream dispelled by the events of the succeeding day? The time approached which was to test the state of her feelings towards Eugene. One morning he returned from Bondy, whither he had ridden unaccompanied, with a grave and melancholy countenance. He briefly informed Madame Beauchamp that he had received intelligence of the illness of his father, which made it incumbent on him to return home without delay. He inquired for Annette, and was informed that she had taken her book to a little summer-house in the garden, a favorite resort of her's in pleasant weather. Thither the young man bent his steps. He found the lady seated at a rustic table on which lay a small volume, open, but not, as it seemed, engrossing her attention, for she sat apparently absorbed in revery. The sound of his step upon the gravel walk around her, and she turned towards him with a pleasant smile, that disappeared as she observed the melancholy and embarrassment of his expression.

"Pardon me, M. De Merville," she said, commencing the conversation, "but you rode over to Bondy to obtain intelligence from home; I trust it was satisfactory?"

"So far from it," replied Eugene, "that it is of a character which commands my immediate attention; which imposes on me the painful necessity of bidding you an abrupt adieu. My father is alarmingly ill; the letter which conveys the unwelcome information, is written in the hand of his steward."

"Indeed! I am pained to hear this, and sincerely trust you may find him better than you appear to anticipate."

"Hardly so, I am afraid. His health has suffered such repeated shocks, I fear he cannot sustain another severe attack of disease. He has never been well since the death of my poor mother. Ah! Mademoiselle Beauchamp, when the object of a lifelong attachment is suddenly torn from it, the heart must indeed be cold which can survive the shock. Inheriting the feelings of my father, I can foreshadow my own fate in such a

event. Even now, in parting, for a brief space, from one whom I respect—admire—nay, hear me, Mademoiselle Beauchamp—*love*—yes, love devoutly.”

Annette averted her eyes from that gaze of melancholy, passionate devotion.

“Annette! Mademoiselle Beauchamp! pardon me,” sinking beside her, and taking her unresisting hand in his, “pardon me, if I have dared to avow hopes which my looks must have interpreted long ago. But my soul is above disguise, and I could not leave you in this, my bitter hour of woful presage and affliction, without confessing all I felt—all I dared to hope, and learning from you my doom or my happier destiny.”

“M. De Merville,” murmured Annette, but her voice was choked, her bosom heaved, and she sobbed bitterly.

“Gracious Heaven! I have deeply offended you!” cried the young man. “I have misinterpreted your kindness to a chance acquaintance, and outraged your feelings. If so, again I ask your pardon, and will bid you a respectful adieu.”

But the hand which he again pressed, was not withdrawn—the eyes, tearful but beautiful, were lifted to his face with the firm confidence of innocence.

“M. De Merville,” she said, “I am not insensible of your kindness. But I am, if not friendless, poor—my very parentage unknown—a nameless orphan, dependent upon strangers. You are well-born—ah! how little do the high and well-born prize their advantages—you move in a circle of society to which I cannot, to which I do not wish to aspire. Your father—will he sanction your addresses, if I possessed a right to smile upon them?”

“Annette,” replied Eugene, as he stole his arm around her waist, “my noble father loves me—prizes me far—far indeed beyond my poor deserts. He would sacrifice life itself to forward my views. In early life he consented to part from me, that I might obtain the best education the metropolis could afford. He surrounded me with all that was pure in morality, and beautiful in art—he guarded me from the contamination of evil companions and evil principles, and, having taught me to think and act for myself, he left me to my own judgment to learn the great lesson of life. He did not teach me to avoid love—for he told me that it was a high and holy passion—but he taught me what to appreciate and approach in the fairer, the better sex. In this secluded place, I have found the beauty, the virtue, the true cultivation which I sought for in vain in the glittering halls of our gay capital. I have but to tell him that the ideal is found, to win his approving, alas! perhaps his dying smile. Permit me to tell him that the ideal is won.”

And Annette was his. In the first warm kiss he imprinted tenderly and tremblingly upon those sweet lips, the confirmation of his warmest, wildest dreams, came to his enthusiastic spirit. It is not for us to pause by that consecrated bower, to catch the pure accents of that affection sanctified by mutual trust in each other's hearts, and reliance on an over-ruling Providence. Young lover! tearfully yet trustfully leave the side of the cherished one. “Thy foot is on the stirrup, and

thy hand is on the reign,” but thou lingerest to catch the last glimpse of her receding figure, the last wave of her mute but eloquent salute. Now ride forth. The charm and the spell are on thee. The halls to which thou art hastening may echo the lamentation of devoted attachment bereaved of its object, thou may'st tread their sounding corridors, their orphan master, the lips which have blessed thee “many a time and oft,” may be chill and silent now, and the silver hairs thou hast so often viewed with reverence, may wave in the light—some wind above the pall of death, but thou bearest within thy bosom that charm which will assuage the bitter poignancy of this thy first great sorrow. Thou may'st not think of her—the loved one—standing beside the coffin in the funeral hall, or mournfully tracking the remains of what was chivalrous, high-souled and daring, lovely in life, and beautiful in death, in their solemn progress to the final home, but when the night has passed, and the “morrow cometh,” when the memory of the lost is “like the music of other days,” thou wilt rise from thy affliction, chastened, but not confounded, and while remembering that there is one more to plead for thee in Heaven, thou wilt not forget that even on the earth thou art not lonely.

#### CHAPTER IV.—THE MARQUIS DE MIRAPLEUR.

Rap! rap! rap! “Hilloa! open the door, there, if you're alive! D'ye hear, within there?” Rap! rap! rap!

These gentle salutations were addressed to the door and inmates of the farm, towards the middle of a stormy night some time after the departure of Eugene from Bondy. The thunder was pealing wildly overhead, the lightning glared incessantly, and the huge oaks of the forest groaned and tossed their gnarled arms abroad as the winds roared through them in the height of a tempestuous gale.

“What do you want?” shouted Pierre Beauchamp, in a voice that rose above the elemental warfare, as he thrust his night-capped head from the window of his dormitory.

“What do I want? Let me in first, and I'll tell you afterwards. Be quiet, you noisy rascal!” The latter exclamation was addressed to the surly mastiff, who was tugging at his chain, and howling most vociferously.

“In a moment,” answered the farmer, and, stopping a brief space, to improve his personal appearance, he descended the stairs and unbarred the door, shielding his lamp from the furious gust which threatened to extinguish it.

“Come at last!” replied the midnight visitor. “Well, bear a hand here. My master's carriage has upset, the horses are playing wild work with the harness, and I'm afraid the Marquis is hurt.”

Beauchamp followed the stranger, and soon came to the *debris* of a carriage, near which lay a man apparently insensible, whom he *dragged* to carry into the house. The farm-servants had now assembled, and while some ran to secure the horses, others lighted a fire, and the blaze that shot up the huge chimney, dis-

closed an elegantly-dressed and fashionable youth, whose pallid features gave signs of returning consciousness.

"Lacaille!" muttered the stranger.

"I'm with you, monsieur," replied the valet. "Are you in pain?"

"This arm!" murmured the wounded man—"tis excruciating. Send or go for a surgeon! But tell me—where am I?"

"In good hands, sir," replied the honest farmer. "Lie still, and you shall have attendance instantly. Jacques! saddle my best horse, and ride to Doctor Fleury's instantly." The stranger closed his eyes and sank back on the sofa.

"We shall make it worth your while," said the valet, consequentially. "The Marquis de Mirafleur never fails to requite a service. Get us a drop of brandy, my good *bourgeois*, and that as speedily as your very substantial pair of supporters will permit you."

Pierre Beauchamp frowned on the insolent servant as he followed his direction. A few drops of the liquor revived the marquis, who opened his eyes again.

"Lacaille! this is annoying. I am afraid this accident will detain me here some time. 'Tis always my deuced luck—fortune cogs the dice."

"Be thankful, monsieur, to Providence," observed the farmer, "that your life was spared."

The marquis opened his eyes very wide. "Lacaille!" he murmured, languidly, "he preaches!"

"How very good!" exclaimed the valet. "One would think," he added to himself, "that the shock had knocked the affectation out of him. But second nature—humph!"

"Lacaille!" drawled out the nobleman. "Got my trunks etc., out of the carriage. One must be decent even if one is at the point of death. I shall look frightfully pale to-morrow, but of course there will be no *belle dame* to captivate. Eh! my good man?"

"You may spare yourself the trouble, monsieur," replied the farmer, drily.

"Rather spare me your wit," rejoined the marquis. "Lacaille! he is sarcastic. Remove him—he is nauseous."

"My presence shan't annoy you," said the sturdy farmer. "As soon as I have given orders for your comfort, I shall leave you to the congenial society of your valet."

"Congenial society!" repeated the marquis, keeping up his affected style of speaking, even though writhing with pain. "The man is a degree above the vulgar in his language." And, in truth, the refinement of Annette was not without its effect, even on her rustic entertainers.

In due time the man of skill arrived. He was fat and flurried, with a huge snuff-box, and a huge box of instruments. Both of these he opened, the former for a pinch, and the latter, to strike the surrounding servants with horror and astonishment.

"Let me look at the arm!" he cried. "Aha! looks bad—feels bad—bad case—very formidable. Pulse—

ha! feverish. Bad symptoms. Never mind. Bleed him. Ounce of blood—pound of cure—that's the way with Doctor Fleury."

Notwithstanding this discouraging commencement, the worthy surgeon discovered that the extent of the injury sustained by the noble marquis, was comprised in a few severe bruises and sprains, though he secretly determined that he should undergo a long confinement, saying to himself, as, after discharging the duties of his office, he slowly rolled away in his heavy old-fashioned chaise.

"Good job—good job. Young nobleman—bleed him well—purse and person. Too much blood, too much money. Frighten him, and so forth. New coat for self, and new bonnet for madame. Six weeks' job at quickest time. Ha! ha! very good!"

But Doctor Fleury, like many other disinterested persons of his stamp, was building *Chateaux en Espagne* without a sure foundation, as he discovered, the very next morning, when the marquis, feeling himself much refreshed by a good night's rest, for which he was perhaps indebted to the surgeon's anodynes, not only declared himself able to get along without the assistance of the Esculapius, but moreover, peremptorily dismissed that learned leech with a single fee, and the consolatory reflection that *Quos Deus vult perdere, prius dementat*. Towards dinner-time the distinguished guest actually insisted upon making his toilette, and even on going down stairs and presenting himself to the family, leaning on the sturdy arm of his affectionate and devoted *valet*. The latter had unconsciously induced this effort by a glowing description of the personal attractions of the daughter of their host. He was struck with the beauty of the young lady, and his salutation, polished and easy, was likewise respectful for the Marquis of Mirafleur.

"Mademoiselle," said he, after a few minutes' conversation, in which the vivacity, intelligence and politeness of the lady made a strong impression, "if anything could reconcile me to an absence from dear Paris, it would be the pleasure of meeting such elegance among these benighted peasants. In fact, I consider the pleasure of being acquainted with you, cheaply earned, at the expense of a few bruises, and a broken carriage."

Annette, not much pleased with the present manner of the marquis, made a cool and careless answer, which showed how much she was displeased and disconcerted with his hyperbolic tone of flattery.

"It is a thousand pities," cried the marquis, "that you do not live in dear, delightful Paris. On the word of a nobleman, you would create quite a sensation there. One half the *beau monde* would tease you with their adoration, and the other half would wish you—at Bondy."

"When I am content, M. le Marquis, even without listening to those high-flown compliments which, as somebody says, you fine gentlemen think it necessary to provide yourselves with for your intercourse with us poor country girls, just as the traders carry beads and trinkets to the savages. But I am a very peculiar *savage* myself."

self, and prefer the pure ore of truth to its lacquered and Dutch-gilt representative, flattery."

"But, mademoiselle, the latter is the current coin."

"And you gentlemen, like modern bankers, with a little stock of the pure gold of sincerity, issue promises and praises, as plentifully as *billets de banque*."

"Mademoiselle is too severe. I, too, albeit a follower of fashion, should have worshipped sincerity all my life, if she had presented herself in the form of a goddess. Perhaps I may yet renounce my former faith."

"Sudden proselytes are rarely true believers."

"Not when they are converted by a miracle."

As the last rejoinder was not responded to by Annette, who was shortly after called away, Mirafleur contented himself with the applauses of Lacaille.

"Come hither, *coquin*," said the master. "You know, my good fellow, that, following the customs of my ancestors, the ancient *noblesse*, the porcelain clay of our *belle France*, I have made you more of a companion than a valet. Now, in your capacity of counsellor and confidant, I will impart to you a piece of news."

"I am all attention, my lord."

"Lacaille, as this hand is disabled for the present, you may imagine it placed upon my heart in token of sincerity. I am in love!"

"For the ninety-ninth time. Do you call this news, my lord?"

"Lacaille! you will be pleased to attempt no pleasantry. I repeat it; I am in love. What shall I do?"

"Oh! propose, of course, my lord. Break off matters with the *Duchesse de Diamans*, sell your stud and your hotel, and on the wrecks of your property, sit down for life with mademoiselle here, in the corner of a farm-house. Ha! ha! But perhaps, after all, it may not be so bad. The lady may refuse you."

"Refuse me, the conqueror—me, the observer of all observers? Lacaille, you compel me to smile. Refuse me? never named by my patronymic Julio De Mirafleur, but *the* marquis par prééminence. 'Tis absurd."

"My dear master, do give up this horrid scheme," cried the devoted valet, in tones of deep affliction. "Don't—pray don't marry her—if it's only to oblige me, sir."

"Calm yourself, *Mon cher*. I give you my word and honor that I will not. But we must try the force of our attractions, Lacaille; we are positively picqued to do it. We must be beloved by the peasant."

And accordingly, not to dwell upon the heartlessness and affectation of the marquis, he devoted himself to the task of pleasing the young lady, and he certainly succeeded. Dropping, in her presence, the tone of frivolity and frigid soporific he commonly adopted to his inferiors, he introduced different topics calculated to display his knowledge of the world, in its various aspects, to the best advantage. He described the countries he had visited, the works of art he had seen, and criticised the popular music, poetry, and painting, in a style which showed him a perfect connoisseur.

But Annette was only amused, and the only sensation he awakened, was that of pity that one so brilliant, witty and accomplished, should live without any honorable aim, lost to every object but the amusement of the hour. When he thought her properly prepared, after a few days' display of his knowledge, elegance and person, he seized a favorable opportunity to disclose his passion.

Lacaille was wandering in the garden, discontented and alone, wondering how long the infatuation of his master would endure, mourning his own total destitution of excitement, and casting many wistful glances in the direction of Paris, the cynosure of his eyes, when he heard his name called. He was astounded, not at the unexpected call, but at the harsh tone, the fiery glance, the flushed face of his master, commonly so impassive a shield to the emotions of his heart, so

"well skilled to hide  
All, save unutterable pride."

"Lacaille," he said, in short stern accents, "get our horses ready instantly. I am going to Paris."

"To Paris, my lord?"

"To Paris, sir! why does the fool stand gaping there? Don't detain me ten minutes. It shall cost you your place to do so."

And with these words he strode to and fro in the garden, while Lacaille left him to execute his orders. So soon as the rattle of wheels was heard, he entered the house and sought out the farmer.

"My good man," said he, haughtily, "you have done well by me, but not, doubtless, without the hope of recompense. Here is my purse."

But Pierre drew himself proudly up. "I am no hireling, my lord, nor petty inn-keeper. He who crosses my threshold is my guest, and the unfortunate are my friends. Put up your purse; I will not touch a franc."

"As you will, sir," replied the marquis, coolly. "I shall find some means to requite your hospitality." Lacaille held the steps of the carriage—the young nobleman sprang to his seat. The steps were put up, the door closed, Lacaille climbed to the box, and away flew the carriage. Ten miles had passed rapidly away before they stopped at a post-house. Lacaille again presented himself at the door of the carriage.

"Will you alight, monsieur?"

"No; stay here a-while, 'till those busy brutes are a little farther off. Lacaille! she rejected me."

"Voilà l'affaire fini!" cried the valet.

"Hear me!" cried the nobleman; "I will have revenge!"

"You *shall* have it, monsieur," replied the supple valet. "I promise my assistance, and I never failed you yet."

A ghastly smile convulsed the features of the marquis, as he folded his arms and fell back in his seat. "Drive on!" cried Mirafleur to the coachman, as he sprang to the box—"to Paris—Paris!"

#### CHAPTER V.—NEW EVENTS.

"What have you brought from Bondy for me, father?" was Annette's address to Pierre Beauchamp,



as the latter returned from a ride to town, one morning.

"No letter, my poor child," replied the farmer, "but a little piece of news. At the *Lion d'Or*, I heard a lady, who came in a fine carriage, inquiring for this very place, and for yourself, too, my child. So, thinks I to myself, after I had heard the direction given, I'll get into the saddle and spur home through the forest, for my dame and Annette mustn't be taken by surprise."

Scarcely were the words uttered, when, amidst the cracking of a postillion's whip, a carriage rolled up to the door, and an aged lady, in deep mourning, was assisted to alight. She appeared laboring under the combined effects of fatigue and agitation, and it was some time before the venerable visitor could regain composure enough to make herself heard and understood.

"Mademoiselle Delancy," said she, at length, "I am the bearer of unwelcome intelligence—intelligence which concerns yourself, mademoiselle, deeply. My heart tells me whom I am addressing, and by the same instinct you may divine whose messenger I am. Alas! mademoiselle, I would the task of informing you of what has happened, had fallen into other hands. I am the aunt of Eugene De Merville."

At that name the blood forsook the countenance of Annette. She closed her eyes, and a deadly tremor seemed to take possession of her limbs. But she nerved herself.

"Speak on, madame," she said, taking her aged visitor by the hand, "I will make an effort to command myself."

"You may have heard," said Madame Ferrier, "that Eugene has lost his father."

"I feared as much," was the reply.

"Grief at this event, almost drove him distracted. He sought Paris to attend to some affairs which commanded his attention, and was there taken sick, at my house. In his moments of delirium, as well as in his lucid intervals, he has spoken incessantly of you. My dear young lady, you have now to hear the worst. He is given up by the physicians, and, would you close his dying eyes, you must hasten with me to Paris."

It was no time to indulge in passionate lamentation, but with a heart overcharged with grief, stunned and bewildered at the suddenness of the stroke which had fallen on her, Annette prepared to accompany Madame Ferrier. The latter required a little rest, but in an incredible short space of time she announced her readiness to recommence her journey. A brief farewell was all Annette could utter, as, through tearful eyes she watched the misty trees and receding chimneys of her late happy home.

Magnificent Paris! what gay crowds were loitering in thy illuminated gardens; wandering on thy spacious boulevards, or by thy star-lit Seine, spanned with the lofty bridges, whose lights dim-twinkled on the tremulous tide; what happy, buoyant forms whirled in the ringing dance, in hundreds of thy bright saloons, what

brilliant revelry sent up its shouts from the wine cup and the wassail, as the carriage of our mourners rolled through a sullen gateway over the wretched pavements, to the hotel of Madame Ferrier. This was an old building in the Faubourg St. Germain, full of the by-gone grandeurs of a decayed line. A gloomy entrance admitted the carriage to a dimly-lighted courtyard. All was still, decent and aristocratic about that melancholy household. They alighted, and were shown by a male servant up a pair of stairs, into a luxuriously furnished sitting-room. Here Annette was left alone for a few minutes, while the old lady went to inquire after her nephew. She instantly returned, saying that he was awake, and failing rapidly, requested to behold Annette without a moment's delay. Poor Annette dried her fast falling tears, and followed her weeping conductress to the sick chamber. Madame Ferrier withdrew as her companion entered. The room was dimly lighted—a muffled figure lay upon a sofa. As the door closed, the figure started up, the ample cloak fell from the shoulders, and as Annette gazed with horror on the countenance, she recognized the Marquis De Mirasleur!

#### CHAPTER VI.—THE BOIS DE BOULOGNE—THE END.

An elegantly-dressed young man was reclining carelessly in his seat at the opera, eyeing the attitudes of the reigning danseuse, the Taglioni of the day, through his gold-mounted *lorgnette*, when he heard his name pronounced in a low voice.

"M. De Mirasleur, a word with you. The speaker was a pale young man, of a fiery and decided cast of countenance, and dressed in a suit of the deepest mourning. The marquis neither started nor turned pale, but his eye flashed less brightly than it had done a moment previously, as it rested on the well known features of De Merville."

"I little anticipated the pleasure of seeing you here," said the marquis.

"It is no very pleasant occurrence, monsieur, that lends me to visit a place like this in my days of mourning. But I knew you were here, and that you could not avoid me if you would."

"Avoid you, De Merville," answered the marquis, haughtily, "let me tell you that I am easily found by friend and foe. You assume the tone of the latter. How is this?"

"I will tell you briefly. I have just returned from Bondy. Marquis De Mirasleur, I know the imposition practiced. By Heavens! you turn pale. A young girl—a young, lovely, virtuous girl, has been seduced from the roof of her protectors by the practices of a villain."

"What is that to me?"

"Every thing. I am aware of your visit to that place—of your rejection by Annette. Can you tell me that you have not seen her since—that you did not authorize the imposition I allude to?"

The marquis was silent. At length he said, with forced composure, "What right have you to question me?"

"The right of her affianced lover. Did you, or did you not practice on her credulity?"

Thrice did the marquis attempt to speak, but the words, like Macbeth's amen, stuck in his throat. At length he faltered out, with blanched lips, and a quailing eye, "I did not."

The eyes of De Merville blazed with indignation. Bending his head, and approaching his lips to the ear of his foe, he applied to him an epithet which no Frenchman—a no gentleman can bear without resenting.

"Enough," said the marquis, springing up, and shaking off every appearance of lethargy or irresolution, "I could have spared you what must follow, but you have thrown the dice. I retract the denial I just now made; hear me, and let it half avenge the insult you have offered. She is mine—mine wholly. And mark me—to-morrow—at the hour of sunrise—in the Bois de Boulogne, near the old grey cross, I will attend you. Lacaille shall be with me as witness, and you may bring any friend you like. I name pistols. And now, as you are bent on going—*au revoir*—for my part, I shall stay the *ballet*."

De Merville wended his way to the dwelling of an old friend, Captain Ruder, who had served in the imperial army, to whom he imparted the intelligence of the proposed meeting, and a request that he would go out with him.

"Of course, of course, my friend," replied the captain, "with the greatest pleasure. I wish, however, there was a little more formality in the proceedings, as it is like to be a serious affair, it being obligatory on you to kill M. le Marquis. *Mais n'importe*. 'Tis very well as it is. But come, you are cast down. You have lost a mistress—'tis the fortune of war. He has gained one—the luck ~~is~~ his, if he survives your fire. Have you ever done much in this way before?"

"Never," replied De Merville, "but I shoot indifferently well."

"Aim at the highest vital spot—the pistol has a tendency to droop—little danger of swerving to the right or left. I shall make you both fire at the word—the chances will be equal. And now—I have some excellent burgundy."

"Pardon me," replied De Merville, "I am the worst boon companion in existence, Ruder. Get me pen and ink, and while I write, you can amuse yourself, and your *chansons à boire* will not disturb me in the least."

His wish was complied with, and while Ruder passed the night as he had many a night before battle, though in more boisterous company, De Merville had written various letters, and prepared himself for the morrow. Scruples he had none, for he was acting a part that custom and the tone of good society, in France, sanctioned as chivalrous and honorable. It is not for us to judge him by our own purer code.

Cool and bracing was the air through which the gentlemen drove rapidly to the rendezvous in the Bois de Boulogne. Ruder selected a convenient spot with an experienced eye, and was expatiating on its merits to his friend, when a tilbury drove up, and from it descended the marquis, and Lacaille with a case of pistols. The sight of his enemy strengthened the deadly resolution of Eugene, while the marquis derived no par-

ticular inspiration from the presence of his adversary. The parties took their places, and the pistols were placed in their hands. Ruder stepped out of the line of fire, and raising his voice to a stern shout, gave the signal. The explosions were simultaneous. As the smoke curled lighted upward, De Merville remained at his post, but Julio, Marquis De Mirasleur, stretched his length upon the sod.

"It's all over," said Lacaille, supporting the marquis on his knee, while Ruder and De Merville rushed to the wounded man.

"De Merville," murmured the Marquis; "take my hand. I have been punished rightly. I attempted to deprive you of Annette. But I found her firm and incorruptible. On the honor of a dying man, she escaped from my toils unharmed. As for me, my race is run. Could I live—it might be that repentance—a different life"—the blood gushed from his lips, and he fainted. Ruder examined his wound.

"Why didn't you bring a surgeon?" cried De Merville.

"Ay, he must have a surgeon," muttered Ruder, "and that speedily. Get him to Paris with despatch," he added, to Lacaille. "As for you, M. De Merville, I need scarcely recommend a speedy departure from this charming capital. For myself, I can hide in Paris, where it would not be convenient for you to bivouac."

Eugene assented to the justice of his remarks, and having taken leave of the captain, was soon *en route* for Bondy, at which place he hoped to set pursuit on foot after the fugitive Annette. As he approached the scene of so much happiness and so much disappointment, tears rose to his eyes, and he vainly endeavored to conquer his painful emotions. The roof that sheltered her, the flowers she loved and cherished, the rustic summer-house in which she heard with smiles and tears the story of his love—the sight of these objects increased the oppression of heart under which he labored. But all was not lost, perhaps—not utterly. He sprang from the chaise, rushed into the house, and the next instant, held Annette to his heart.

The period of her trials was ended—that of her happiness to come. She had escaped from the toils that had been laid for her, and she had just been apprized of a piece of unexpected good fortune. Madame Bonand having met with a series of misfortunes, among which, the heaviest was the elopement and subsequent death of her daughter, Juliette, regarded these afflictions as a punishment sent expressly by Heaven, in consequence of the deception practiced on Annette; therefore, when fully persuaded that she was on her death-bed, she confessed her fraud, and made restitution of the stolen property to the young lady, who now assumed her rightful name. She sighed when De Merville informed her of the duel, and though she forbore to reproach him for his conduct, she exacted a solemn promise that he would never more seek that method of avenging an insult or an injury. In a few days' intelligence arrived from Paris, that Mirasleur was pronounced out of danger, and that De Merville might return openly as soon as he desired. The marriage of the lovers took

place at the farm-house, to the intense delight of Pierre Beauchamp, who passed the evening of the happy day in a state of riotous excitement, and was as much of a maniac as when Annette first met him on her first eventful journey. The day after, the young pair took leave of their rustic but faithful friends, and entered a splendid carriage destined to whirl them to the capital. Of the gayeties of their life, during their sojourn in that brilliant metropolis, we do not now intend to write. They met De Mirasleur a graver and a better man. The resolutions he had formed during his confinement, were faithfully adhered to after his convalescence; his fortunes were improved by the change, and that he was no less fascinating as a moral man than a *roué*, was soon discovered by the success of his addresses to one of the most beautiful, wealthy, and virtuous ladies in Paris. Long before his marriage, he parted with Lacaille; or, to speak more properly, Lacaille, suspecting that the marquis was meditating his discharge, begged to be relieved from further service, because, like Snake, he "lived by the badness of his chracter," and, were it imagined that he had adopted the new principles of his master, "he should lose every friend he had in the world."

Original.

# BIDDY WOODHULL; \*

OR, THE PRETTY HAY-MAKER.

A TALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'LAFITTE,' 'CAPT. KYD,' 'THE QUADROON,'  
'BURTON,' ETC., ETC.

PART IV.

## THE EXQUISITE.

ABOUT half an hour before Beal Tucker dismissed his flock, and left his office, a young gentleman opened his eye-lids, and looked gaping round a luxurious chamber, but half lighted by the ray of noonday that streamed in pencilled lines of silver through the closed shutters. After yawning thrice very loud, and very long, like one who feels that he is master of the premises, he turned himself slowly over in his bed; he then, with an effort, raised himself on his elbow, and showed a handsome yet very pale and haggard face, as if he had been at some late carousal the night previous. He remained in this position, immovable, full five minutes, the while contorting his flexible features into hideous and loathing grimaces, and, at intervals, smacking his parched palate as if he had a bad taste in his mouth. At length he raised himself from his elbow, and sat up in bed, letting his head fall upon his breast, and his whole person droop into a trist and depressed attitude. It was Fitz Henry Barton, the morning after a "dem fine spree!"

He sat for some time in this very penitent-looking position, and at length made an exertion to reach his watch from beneath his pillow. He looked at the time by the faint light admitted through the shutters, and said in a weak tone, "Half past eleven—dem this wine! I feel sick! Half past eleven! Frid! Frid, I say!"

There was no answer, for his black servant, Frederick, was holding a *tête-à-tête* out of the library window, with the yellow chambermaid in the chamber window of the next house.

"Frid! you dem Frid!" replied Mr. Fitz Henry Barton in a louder key; but his voice was not yet strong enough to penetrate the door.

After listening a-while, and finding he was not heard, he slid down from the side of the bed, crossed to the fireplace, and gave the bell a very fierce pull for such a quiet person as he was. The jingling started the chambermaid from the window, to put the forgotten coverlid on her bed, and the *valet* from his, to hasten to wait on his master.

"Wat in the devil deu you mean, Frid, by not being in the way when I awake?" remonstrated Mr. Fitz Henry Barton, in a nervous tone of petulant anger. "Don't you know I always want you by me when I wake?"

"Beg pardon, massn," said the genteel valet, opening one of the upper shutters, and hastening to put his master's dressing gown upon him; "I vas jis comin' von I hears mass' ring."

"I tell you, Frid, you must always be at the door; what can I do alone by myself, when I wake up? It's dem unhandsome, in you, Frid!" he said, in a complaining voice.

"I knows it, massa," said Frederick, with a downcast look; "an' I promises nebber gib offence nebber no more."

"Now see you don't, Frid, an' I'll maybe forgive you this time! Where's my gin-cock-tail? Don't you know I am good for nothing—just like a dem rag in the mornin', 'till I get my gin-cock-tail! Don't you know that, Frid?"

"Yes, massa," said Frederick, placing Mr. Fitz Henry Barton's Indian moccasin's on his feet, and then going towards a marble slab in one corner of the room, on which stood empty champaign bottles, glasses, decanters, etc., etc. There was also upon it a ready made gin-cock-tail, which he placed on a silver salver and brought to his master. The sick and miserable Barton seized hold of it with a nervous hand, and putting it to his lips as a thirsty man would a draught of fresh spring water, drank off the strong and bitter tonic concocted of gin, sugar, and "Stoughton."

Those who have never dissipated at night, and, in consequence, awakened late after it the next forenoon, can know nothing of the misery, bodily and mental, the victims of wine parties suffer! Horror in mind, and depression of body—fever of the brain, and sickness at heart, with the mind tortured by imaginary fears of evil, that no mental effort can shake off, make the situation of the waking debauchee a foretaste of infernal torture! To drown this horrid night-mare of the waking inebriate, recourse is had to artificial stimulants to create opposite sensations; and as, also, the body is relaxed by its previous indulgence, its tone and nerve must be restored by the same means! It is this which makes intemperance so difficult to cure; for the debility and horrors consequent on to-day's inebriation, must be drowned by a strong potation the first moment of waking on the morrow. So the drunkard goes on, 'till even stimulus ceases to act upon the nervous and depressed system, and he sinks into an early grave.

As none who have not experienced it, can appreciate the misery of the first waking moments of a man after a night's intemperance, neither can any such form an idea of the magic effect of a gin-cock-tail or a glass of bitters in dissipating it. No sooner had Fitz Henry Barton drank off, with many a wry mouth, the restoring morning draught "Frid" had mixed for him, than a change came over him as instant as it was striking. His eyes, before heavy and leaden, lighted up, his white lips became red, his pale cheek ruddy with the hitherto stagnant blood, and his whole person seemed to become animate and elastic with new life and vigor. He looked no longer the wretched and pitiable object he had been a few minutes before; but his face wore a pleasant air, and his voice, as he spoke, was natural and firm, though something of the debauchee. Such was the magic effect of a strong draught of the debauchee! But the victim of it, in quaffing it, had made compact for that day through-out, with the demon of intemperance; for having given

\* Continued from page 121.

his spirits the pitch to which health and sobriety keep those of temperate men, he was under the necessity of keeping them up to that point by successive potations through the day, or fall again into that hell of depression from which it had lifted him! If Fitz Henry Barton could have had resolution enough to encounter, and bear for a day or two, the horrors with which he waked each morning, he would soon have found that temperance would give him that elasticity and happiness of spirits which he now foolishly sought for in successive potations of intoxicating poison! The *first day* in a drunkard's reform, is the great day of his trial! Perhaps when the hour approaches in which the reformed inebriate is accustomed to take his dram, which he has resolved no more to touch, it is the most miserable of his life! The first dram *given up*, is the most effective blow to the chain of his slavery. A drunkard resolutely withstanding the temptation to drink while the hour he is accustomed to indulge is passing away, presents a moral spectacle that angels may gaze upon with admiration and astonishment. Such denial is God-like. The human mind singly in itself, can accomplish nothing morally greater! But we are not writing an essay on intemperance!

Fitz Henry Barton was a new man now that he had taken his pitters. Let it not be supposed from the foregoing remarks, that he was an habitual drunkard! He was no more so than a great many young men of his rank, who yet hold their position in society. He never was seen staggering in the streets, unless by watchmen—but then he didn't care for "Charlies." No one ever saw him drunk in Broadway! He could "carry a good deal," as the phrase is, and his systematic drinking through the day, began to show its effects only towards evening. And all gentlemen, it was expected, would be a little lively after dinner: particularly fashionable young men! Oh, no; Mr. Fitz Henry Barton was no common drunkard! Besides his gin-cock-tail on rising, and a glass of wine bitters just before breakfast, to give him an appetite, he never took any thing 'till two hours afterwards, when he would chance to drop into the Astor or Globe, where he always found some friends. With them, in the course of an hour, he would take a brandy sling, after a while, a rum julap, and then, perhaps a gin sling. He would then walk Broadway, and, possibly, in his way, stop in at the City Hotel, or the Washington, and take another gin sling. As the dinner hour approaches, say an hour before it, he would take a gin-cock-tail to correct his stomach, and half an hour afterwards a "wine bitters;" a quarter of an hour before dinner, he would take another with a "little more bitters," and a few moments before dining, take a gin-cock-tail, made stiff with "Stoughtons." Such was Mr. Fitz Henry's usual daily routine of drinking, for each glass he took, craved its successive one, and he changed his drinks as the different degrees of depression of his spirits and system, made it necessary. There are a great many "moderate drinkers" like Fitz Henry Barton! At dinner he never had any appetite and loathed his food. He could eat nothing without vinegar upon it; his whole taste was vitiated and

palled. He would drink but little wine at table, for its taste was insipid to him, compared with spirits, and when he dined at home, alone, he always substituted brandy. After dinner he always took a tumbler of stiff brandy and water, and then drove out to Burnham's, or upon the avenue. Yet with all this drinking, Fitz Henry Barton managed to get along through each day, without exposing himself in any marked way, but every night he went to bed more or less drunk. He could toe a line, so well he preserved his self-possession, while walking home, but once in his door, and hid from the public eye, he would stagger through the hall, and often have to be carried to bed by his faithful "Frid."

"Well, Frid," he said, in a cheerful tone, as he now felt the bitters warming in his veins, "what have you got for my breakfast, hey, boy?"

"Omelet, nice ham, and coffee, Massa Barton," said Frid, placing his cravat and vest beside him, and otherwise assisting him in his toilet.

"Make me a cup of black tea, Frid."

"I made him already," said Frid, grinning. "I know massa want him dis mornin'."

"How did you know that, Frid?" asked his master, arranging his chin, whiskers and mustache before the mirror.

"I 'members well you always axes for black tea de mornin's after you wommit in de hall."

"Pah, beast! you make me sick! Yes, I was ill last night, dem'd ill, Frid."

"Any body'd know dat," answered Frid."

"Did I totter—that is, did I stagger—from weakness, I mean, Frid?"

"Yes, Massa Barton, c-yah, yah, yah! an' you took me for a watchman, and giv' me a black eyeo."

"Capital, ha, ha, hah! So I gave you a black eye, Frid?" repeated Mr. Barton, laughing immoderately, and evidently much gratified at this feat. "Let me see, Frid!"

And the valet removed a handkerchief which his master had not before noticed he had tied over one eye, and displayed the swollen member.

"Ha! excellent! Scientific! Neatly put, Frid, eh? I have some science in my knuckles, hey?"

"Werry scientif'cally done, Massa Barton," said the good natured Frid, covering his eye again. "Now, massa, as you have made you' toillum, all but de boots and coat, please walk into breakfast."

With these words Frid opened a door, and Mr. Fitz Henry Barton, wrapped in his Indian dressing-gown, indolently rising from his velvet arm-chair passed through, while he held it open, into a small but elegant library. The book-cases, and also one case of rare shells, wore of rose wood gilt; the books gorgeous with gold and ornamental binding; the carpet rich, and returning no sound to the footstep; the ceiling beautifully painted in fresco, by the inimitable pencil of a distinguished fresco painter in New-York; and the sides lined with crimson fauteuils and low ottomans! It was altogether a *recherche* apartment. But Mr. Fitz Henry Barton was a rich young man, and loved such outward testimonials of opulence. Near the centre of

the room, stood a small round breakfast table. He threw himself into an arm chair beside it. Frid handed him a paper, which he had opened and dried for him, and then poured out his black tea. Mr. Fitz Henry Barton glanced with a fashionable air over the columns of the paper, and not seeing any thing that particularly struck his fancy, threw it on the carpet with a—

"Phaw! the papers are losing all their wit! Nobody used up this morning! no crim-cons! no interesting police reports! no pretty gearls brought up! no run-a-way matches, no seductions, no murder cases!"

Here Mr. Fitz Henry Barton took a sip of black tea, and nibbled a bit of dry toast. But he evidently ate because he felt nature required it. He seemed to relish nothing. Beside him stood his usual glass of wine-bitters untouched. He looked at it two or three times, as if he would stretch his hand for it, but some association made his taste revolt, and each time he turned from it with a loathing "pah!"

"I don't know what's the matter with me, Frid; I feel worse than usual;" and he placed his delicate hand on his stomach. "Frid, I think you may give me another cock-tail!"

"Yes, Massa," said Frid, hastening to obey.

"No, no, these dem cock-tails don't agree with me this morning! Give me a wine glass of pure gin, with a dash of *marischino* on the top! I think that will do—I feel so faint about the stomach! You didn't make the cock-tail strong enough."

The truth was, that Mr. Fitz Henry Barton's stomach began to crave something stronger each day; spirit weakened with water, would no longer continue to act upon it. He felt this to be the case, and for the first time in his life, resorted to clear spirits. He drank off the fiery liquid which Frid handed him, and after the unpleasant burning in his palate had gone off, he confessed to Frid that he felt much better. "very much better."

"Yes, Frid," he said with earnestness, "gin and *marischino* is the thing! Its a drink for a gentleman. Dem gin-cock-tails! What do you drink, yourself, Frid?"

"I never drinks," answered Frid.

"True, that is proper. None but gentlemen should drink. Ambrosia is for gods, and gin for gentlemen! understand that, Frid! It's dem Latin I took it from! Has Jack Rawdon been here to call on me, Frid?"

"No, massa."

"Jack's a fine fellar, Frid—a dem fine fellar. He has no money—but then I lend him, and so he's always flush! I like Jack—devil of a fellow among the gearls! Frid, give me a segar!" Frid obeyed. "Regalias! None but a gentleman should smoke Regalias! Bought them at Anderson's! Dem pretty gearl there, Frid! Jack Rawdon and I bet which should run away with her. I bought these segars just to ask her to meet me. She smiled, and when a dem woman smiles, I always take it yes, Frid. I went to the place in the Park, and met, instead, her dem brother, a stout, handsome dem sailor fellar. He set upon me and would have whipp-

ped me but for my science, Frid. I have kept away from Anderson's since. Jack and I have found out seven pretty gearls we mean to try and seduce. It's ripe fun for us young bloods! Two of them are milliner's apprentices; one of 'em keeps in a confectionary store, and one is a widow's daughter; the others, I believe, are snug little chambermaids. There is another I have in my eye, Frid, down in the country, and if Ned Morris stays in Charleston much longer, I'll drive down there, and run off with her. Ned, you must know, has taken a shine to her, and he's so dem'd virtuous, it'll do him no good to flirt with her! I'm half a dem'd mind to drive down there to-day! There's fine sport for a man of mettle in New-York, Frid! Do you know I keep a man in pay, to look out for pretty nice gearls from the country, for me? Well, I do! and he's driven more than one pretty fish to my net. I pay well, you know. I don't mind money.

Thus the fashionable Mr. Fitz Henry Barton run on from the effects of his last exhilarating potation, and as he did not expect Frid to reply at all, and as the prudent valet was too well accustomed to his master's way to do so, he might have continued talking 'till he had revealed all his gallantries to his valet, and the effervescence of his spirit had passed off. But just at this instant his street door bell rung with a sharp business-like pull.

"Eh, demme, Frid! There's the bell. If it's Jack Rawdon, ask him to come up. Jack's a dem good fellar!"

Frid left the room, and soon returning, said that a man, who refused to give his name, wanted to see Mr. Barton privately.

"Privately!" repeated the exquisite, elevating his eyebrows. "Oh, ah! But how does he look, Frid?"

"Sallow and thin, with black brows, and black coat," answered Frid, giving an accurate description of Beal Tucker.

"Ah, yes," said Barton with a start of pleased anticipation, "I think I know who he is! Show him in, Frid."

Beal Tucker, who had waited in the hall, now entered the library and made a very low and sycophantic bow to the elegant occupant—but Beal Tucker did reverence to the representative of money, not to the abstract man, for with all his low cunning and avarice he had a true knowledge of men, and particularly of the personage before him. Mr. Tucker, therefore, bowed very respectfully to Mr. Barton, who gave him a sort of familiarly condescending half nod, at the same time saying, in the affected tone he assumed before all but his man, Frid,

"How ar' ye, Tucker? I'm just at my breakfast, you parceive! Fashionable to breakfast at noon! Nobility in England all do it, my boy!"

"Yos, sir," said Beal; "and I don't see when a 'Merican gentleman is rich, why he shouldn't do and act like any noble of 'em all. Its money makes the man, in my 'pinion, Mr. Barton."

As this was rather equivocal flattery, Mr. Fitz Henry Barton chose to notice it only by a doubtful stare; and then waving his right hand for Mr. Beal to take a seat, he waved his left for Frid to quit the room. There

was a moment's silence on the part of the *par noble fratrums* after the valet left the library, which was occupied by Mr. Barton in smoothing the coat of his segar by rolling it between his thumb and fore-finger, and by Mr. Beal in twisting his old black hat round between his knees by the string of the inside leather. At length he looked up beneath his beetle brows, and, to do him justice, looking very mean and guilty, and said, hesitatingly—

"Wall, Mister Barton, I've called to see you on that little matter of business we had a talk about onct. I hope we are alone!"

"Yes, Tucker, quite alone. So you have come to tell me you have some dem pretty rural!"

"Why not exactly so, Mister Barton, at least just yet—but—"

"But what—dem it, Tucker, you have lost your speech!"

"I only wanted to know if you are willing to give what you promised me if I send you a nice young girl from the country?"

"Yes—from the country! I wouldn't give twenty dem dollars for one of these pert, hackneyed city girls that, if they continue virtuous, lose all that pretty bashful modesty that's so dem delightful, you know, Tucker! I'm tired of the city dem beauties, and want to have something unsophisticated!"

"And you will give me one hundred dollars if I will send you such a one?" asked Beal Tucker, his eyes lighting up in anticipation of soon possessing this sum.

"'Pon honor!—that is, if she is pretty and young, and rural!" said Mr. Fitz Henry Barton, throwing his head back in his chair, and exhaling the tobacco smoke from his pipe in a long spiral wreath towards the painted ceiling.

"Will you give me that in writing, Mr. Barton?" asked the cautious Beal.

"Why, Tucker," said Barton, carelessly, "it would be dem'd awkward, you know, for both of us if such a writing should, by accident, be seen by any body else. I cannot put any thing on paper."

"She is very beautiful, and not a day over sixteen," said Tucker, artfully. "If you should see her you'd double the money."

"Demnition, Tucker," cried Barton, starting with pleased surprize, "thon you have one at your office!"

"Not in my office exactly," said he, evasively, "but in the city."

"Young?"

"Sixteen, not a month over."

"Beautiful?"

"She will astonish you when you see her as much as she did me. I never beheld a prettier countenance!"

"Fine figure?"

"Perfect, from head to foot."

"Tall or short?"

"Middling height."

"Dark or fair?"

"A clear brunette."

"When did she come to the city?"

"This morning."

"And is now?—"

"At my house."

"Done. Send her here and the money is yours!"

"Give me your hand on it, Mr. Barton," said the wary villain; and he extended his dark thin hand towards the exquisite.

"Dem and demnition, Tucker!" cried Mr. Fitz Henry Barton, shrinking back from the contact; "do you think I am going to shake hands with you like two boxers before a set-to?"

"I can easily keep the girl from you," said Tucker, moodily, and advancing towards the door. "I don't force her upon you. Pay me fifty dollars down on the nail, and fifty to-morrow, come!"

"Well, Beal, have it as you will. Recollect I trust you altogether here! You know my taste."

"She will suit you, or I will give back the money."

"Dem the money, Tucker; I want a pretty girl. There's a *fifty*," he added, drawing it from his pocket-book and twisting it across the table to him. "Now go and send her here directly. Mind, you let her make no dem blunder, now."

"I'll take care for that, Mr. Barton," said Beal, placing the note carefully in an old leather wallet crammed with advertisements for servants; "she'll be here before two o'clock!"

"You're a good fellow, Tucker, dem good fellow. Will you take coffee?"

"Thank you—I'm just going home to my dinner!"

Dinner! My soul, Beal, how can you eat your dem dinner at one o'clock?"

"By thinking its my breakfast," said Tucker, with a sneer, as he was leaving the room. "Good afternoon, Mr. Barton."

"Good morning to you, Mr. Tucker! Now, there goes a fellar that dines at one o'clock and says 'Good afternoon' before dinner at that. In my opinion is demnition vulgar to say 'good morning' before one has dined if it be not till eight o'clock. But what more can be expected of an Intelligence office man? So, I am to have a dem'd adventure! I must prepare my toilet! Frid, where are you, Frid?"

"Yes, massa," said the valôt.

"Have you shown that fellar out, Frid?"

"Yes, massa."

"Well, Frid, I'm going to dress now! Remove the brikfast assist me at my toilet. I expect a female visitor on private business."

"Yes, massa," said the initiated valôt.

"After you show her up, you can lock the front door, you know, and have the afternoon to yourself if you want to walk out."

"Yes, massa," said Frid, with a pleased look; and he began very assiduously to aid his master in his toilet. First Mr. Fitz Henry Barton took a bath in a handsome and convenient bathing-room opening from his bed chamber. After the bath he throw on his wrapper and Frid gave him a stiff brandy and water. He then prepared to dress himself. Without descending to such particulars as his silk shirt, his silk drawers and his silk hose, his stays, and his very fine white linen with

ruffles half an inch wide on the bosoms, and laced wristbands, we will mention that he put on a very handsome pair of fawn colored pantaloons, made by C. & K., the straps of which Fred buttoned over morocco pumps. His braces were elegantly worked with the needle and the buckles to them were of gold. He then put on a white satin vest and a white silk cravat, which he, after fifteen minutes practice, tied with exquisite taste in a square bow. Fred then dressed and perfumed his long hair parting it with the nicest precision on the left temple; perfumed his mustaches and whiskers with odoriferous oil of Persia, delicately sponged his face over with water and then powdered it with perfumed powder of pearls. Mr. Fitz Henry Barton then washed his hands in sweet scented water, touched his lips with strong cologne to give them color, picked out a hair from his nose-tip with tweezers, took a general and then minute survey of himself in a full-length mirror, when his vanity, to which Fred bore his testimony, pronounced that he was 'dressed.'

"I think I'll do, Frid, eh?" he said, approvingly, as he surveyed his handsome person, while, it must be acknowledged, he had dressed very elegantly. "Now, shall I put on a coat or my Chinese dressing gown, sent me by my friend Kellogg from Canton?"

"If massa Barton 'xpect to see lady, him handsome Chinum dressing gown jist de ting to take 'em eye," said Frid, whose own eye had been taken by the rich and brilliant dyes of this elegant garment.

"Well, Frid, I believe I will wear that!"

Fred assisted his master in putting it on, when Mr. Fitz Henry Barton looked in the glass and pronounced himself irresistible.

"I'm quite a handsome fellar, Frid?"

"Yes, you'll car' all afore you in York for dat much, Mass' Barton," said the flattering valët.

"A country girl, if she was as dem pretty as Queen Mary, should feel herself demnition honored, I think, by my notice, eh, Frid?"

"If Mass' Barton go to England Queen Victory fall chock dead in love with him, sure!"

"Think so, Frid?" asked the exquisite Mr. Barton, in whose mind the idea seemed to have taken a hold.

"For sartain, Mass' Barton," said Fred, decidedly.

"Well, I dare say I am as good looking as Prince Albert! I mean to go to England one of these days, Frid. New York is too parvenu! What's the clock, Frid?" he asked, yawning. "It must be two!"

"Jiss two to a ——. There's the door bell."

"Run and show her up, Frid. Don't lët her suspect but what she is to see a lady up stairs. "What a dem loud ring sho gives!"

Mass' Barton tink Fred fool," said the valët, as he hastened to obey.

"Now for the charming rustic," said Mr. Fitz Henry Barton, walking the room with an expectant look of villanous joy; "Tucker is prompt, dem prompt. Charming adventuro this. Oh, the exquisite dem little rural! Frid has opened the street door!"

When Beal Tucker returned to his dwelling he found Biddy Woodhull had made a very comfortable dinner

and was full of expressions of gratitude both to him and his wife, for their kindness.

"Poh, poh! I do it every day—what's the cost of one dinner—not five pence, certainly not six and a quarter! I have been to see the dress-maker and she says she should be glad to engage you, especially when I told him, I mean told her, what a pretty, that is, what a nice industrious young woman you was."

"Oh, thank you, sir," said Biddy, thinking she had judged Mr. Tucker uncharitably, in suspecting him of designing any improper liberties with her.

"Not a word. Here's your ticket—but no matter about it! Ask for Mrs. Fitz Henry. She may be out when you are shown up, but her son will be in, and you can wait for her."

"Yes, sir."

"Have you any handsomer dress than that you have on?"

"Yes, sir, in my bundle."

"Very good. Go in the next room with Mrs. Tucker, and she'll assist you in changing your dress. Mr.—I would say, Mrs. Fitz Henry always likes to see persons dressed and looking as neat as possible.

"Yes, sir," said Biddy, and retiring with Beal's wife, soon reappeared, looking remarkably neat, and, if possible, more interesting. Her appearance with her pretty hat, was tasteful and genteel.

"Yes, yes; two hundred dollars, full!" said Beal to himself, as he looked at her, "and he will pay it willingly. Two hundred dollars! a good round sum to earn for one day's job! I find the 'perquisites,'" he added, facetiously, "bring me more than my regular profits! Well, Miss Bridget, you look quite charming, now! Don't she, Mrs. Tucker?"

"You mind your own business, Beal. You have no more to say, or do, or look, in this matter, than just to get your money, and no more."

Beal looked abashed, and then from the window called to him a little boy who sometimes went on errands for him. "Here, you Jim," he said, as the boy came up stairs, and stood playing with his bare toes, "show this young woman to No. — Chambers street! Don't mistake! the number's right on the door."

"I can read figur's, I guess," answered Jim, pulling up his ragged trowsers for want of a pin to fasten them to his dirt-colored shirt.

"Well, see you do. Here, Miss, you can follow that boy; he'll show you right."

"I haven't my ticket, sir."

"Oh, never mind the ticket! It was only so you shouldn't forget the number of the house. The boy'll show you that," answered Beal, who was too cautious to entrust her with a paper that, very possibly, might be produced in evidence against him. As it was, he knew that no one could prove he had sent her to Chambers Street, or, at least, to Mr. Fitz Henry Barton. Villany is always sagacious!

"Good afternoon," said Biddy, taking up her bundle.

"I shall remember your kindness."

"Good bye," said Mrs. Tucker dryly.

Beal was about to hand her down stairs, when Bruin,



who had lain under a bed in the room, suddenly bounced out in his eagerness to follow his mistress, and running against him, nearly overthrew him.

"What in all creation is that?" screamed Beal, catching a glimpse of the dog's tail, as he darted through the door at the bottom of the stairs, into the street.

"It's Bruin, sir," said Biddy, laughing.

"Who's Bruin?"

"My dog, that followed me from home. He won't leave me."

"He must not go with you there! He don't want a place!" said Beal, who feared the dog might, in some way, be the means of bringing his employer into mischief—possibly be the means of betraying her presence there.

"Call him back!" and Beal ran to the door and called angrily, "Dog, dog, dog!"

"His name is Bruin, sir," said Biddy, following him.

"Bruin, Bruin! Here, Bruin!" repeated Mr. Tucker, soothingly; "come here, Bruin! Poor fellar, Bruin!"

But Bruin wasn't to be coaxed, but stood in the middle of the street, eyeing Beal with a side-long, suspicious look, with his tail between his legs.

"Call him, miss. He will be killed without a muzzle."

"Here, good Bruin, come to me," said Biddy, kindly.

But the dog knew better than to obey her, well knowing there was a conspiracy against him. Biddy advanced towards him, when he started off on a run, and disappeared round the first corner. She lingered, afraid he would get lost; but Beal promising to look after him, persuaded her to go without him.

Following the freckled-faced urchin he had given her for a guide, Biddy soon found herself in Broadway. What with being bewildered by the noise and crowd, dazzled by the gorgeous display in the windows, stopping to look after brilliant ladies and dandies, and gazing at all the odd sorts of persons she met, she at length arrived at Barton's door, hardly knowing whether she had her right and proper senses or not.

"That's the number, young miss," said the boy, in a voice as hoarse as a penny-paper erier; "I know'd the figur's soon as I seed 'em! You got a shillin', miss?"

"No, good boy," said Biddy, embarrassed by his abrupt demand. "But Mr. Tucker will pay you."

"Tucker's a flummucks! Tip us a sixpenny then, Miss, and no blarney."

"I haven't any money, my good boy; I'm very sorry."

"Sorry killed a sorrel cow! If I'd a know'd you hadn't any shiners, I'm blw'd if old Jew Tucker'd got me to come way here. If you're goin' to live here, I'll keep my eye on you, and when you get flush, I'll make you pony up."

With this the boy went to see what he could get out of Beal. This little incident added to her confusion, and she stood some time to recover her self-possession. Besides, it was a great event for her to "go to a situation," and she wished to appear before the lady with composure. At length she knocked on the door with her knuckles. After waiting, and hearing no one, she

repeated the knock still louder. She waited again in vain, and began to think the people were all away from home, when a brisk little dentist passing on the other side of the street, seeing her stand knocking, crossed over, and said with a bow—

"If Miss will pull the bell, she will probably get in," and suiting the action to the word, he gave the bell-knob the sharp pull that had made Mr. Fitz Henry Barton exclaim in surprise, "What a dem loud ring!"

"Is Mrs. Fitz Henry at home, sir?" asked Biddy, respectfully, of the smart liveried Fred.

"Mrs. Fitz Henry Barton? oh, yes, quite at home, missus! Walk in! I'll show you up stairs!"

Biddy entered, and Fred was closing the door, when Bruin bolted through, and upset him on the broad of his back.

"Gor A'mighty, what debble animal dat?" he cried, getting to his feet; "better kill de nigger an' done wid it! Dis your big dog, missus?"

"Yes," said Biddy, laughing merrily; "I can't keep him out. He's gone under the stairs; will you let him stay, good man, and I will send him off soon as I can!"

"He stay for me; I no touch de big dog—I fear de hydifroby. Come up stairs, if missus please!"

Biddy suppressing the traces of laughter from her face, followed the valet up toward the library, from which, Mr. Fitz Henry Barton, wondering at the musical laugh that he had heard, was about to come forth to ascertain the cause of it. On hearing them approach, he retreated from the door, and seated himself with a book in his arm-chair.

J. H. L.

*To be continued.*

## CAUSE AND CURE;

OR,

### CONVERSATIONS BY THE FIRESIDE.\*

BY MRS. HALE.

"How I wish I had a kaleidoscope which would show the future!" exclaimed Ellen Marvin.

The conversation had been concerning the great changes and revolutions which the present remarkable movements throughout the world indicate.

"I should like," she continued, "to put in all the hopes, wishes, plans, promises, and prophecies which will this evening be uttered or formed, then give the kaleidoscope a few turns and see what combinations and catastrophes will take place in the next twelve months."

"Would you confine your view to the fate of nations? or would you like to see the patterns of private life?" inquired the schoolmaster, with a slight smile.

"O, I am all for the public weal," replied Ellen, blushing, while she returned the smile of her kind old friend. "At least," she added, looking down as she spoke, "I did not intend to examine my hopes and wishes for my own friends through such a shifting and cheating medium as a kaleidoscope."

"You would prefer to look into your heart for *his* image," returned the schoolmaster, laying a perceptible emphasis on the pronoun; "and you do wisely. While you find your own feelings true, never doubt the truth of the absent. It is a false mirror that distorts and magnifies. I feel sure that Charles is with us in spirit this evening."

"Ay, that he is," interrupted Mrs. Marvin, earnestly. "He said he should think of us on New Year's Eve, and Charles Howard never forgot a promise. For my part, I think of him every evening; but a traveller, who has so many new and strange objects to occupy his attention, cannot always have his thoughts on his friends at home. But he remembers us to-night."

There was a pause of several minutes in the conversation, while each individual seemed occu-

pied in reflections they did not wish to communicate; yet, could we have read their thoughts, we should have found the same idea—their absent friend. Was he not with *them*, while their hearts were thus communing with *him*? The thousands of miles of this round world, that interposed between them and the object of their thoughts were annihilated or rather travelled over by imagination at a glance. They saw his features as distinctly, in the light of memory, as though he stood before them. As warmth brings out the letters which have been traced in sympathetic ink, so love reveals its impression stronger and plainer as its truth is tested by obstacles which bring its power into exercise. Could Charles Howard have then appeared before that fireside circle, what cordial welcome would have greeted the returning wanderer! And yet he would not have known, or even in his sanguine fancies have conjectured, a tithe of the affection which was cherished in those warm hearts for him. We never reveal our deepest emotions, or speak our most sacred thoughts. The heart's mysteries cannot, in this life, be revealed.

But, while the friends are musing, we will give a slight sketch of their position in the world, and towards each other. We owe this introduction to our readers, who have several times before met this fireside circle in the *Lady's Book*.

Mrs. Marvin was the widow of a clergyman, who formerly officiated in one of the small towns of Berkshire county, Massachusetts. He was a good man, and passed his short life in doing good to others; and though, at his sudden death, he left his widow and infant daughter without any means of support, yet his trust that their Heavenly Father would provide for them was so perfect that he told his wife with his dying breath, he blessed God she was thus entitled to become a pensioner on the divine bounty, which would never fail to the widow and fatherless, if they required, and, in faith, depended upon it. The promise had been to them literally fulfilled. Immediately after the decease

\* This sketch was intended for the January number, but omitted for want of room. The reader must transfer the scene to New Year's Eve.—*Publisher*.

of Mr. Marvin his devoted parishioners pledged themselves to provide for his widow and child. They did this kindly, delicately, and efficiently for fifteen years, never, in all that time, making Mrs. Marvin feel her dependence as a humiliation. Indeed, she and her beautiful daughter were the pride of the village, as every stranger who entered it was soon sure to learn. And then the excellent character of Mrs. Marvin, and the judicious manner in which she educated Ellen, were examples of great benefit to her neighbours. It was often remarked that the village in which this poor dependent widow lived was the pleasantest place of residence in the county, as all the people appeared amiable, and were far more refined and intelligent than in any other town in the vicinity. So surely does goodness promote happiness, and real benevolence exalt and bless those who give as well as those who take. When Ellen was about sixteen, Mrs. Marvin, by the decease of an old bachelor uncle, became possessed of quite a fortune; that is, to her moderate wishes, it seemed so. She had a lovely little cottage, with ample grounds, situated in the very pleasant town of Roxbury, near Boston; and, moreover, was to receive, during her lifetime, the interest on twenty thousand dollars, securely invested in railroad stock. The whole property was to go to Ellen at her mother's decease, provided she married with her consent, and that of a guardian, whom the said testator named. This guardian was Mr. Zachariah Learned, better known by his friends as *Master Learned*, or the *School-master*. He had been a successful teacher of youth upwards of thirty years, and had well earned the right to the *otium cum dignitate*, which he now enjoyed.

The long tried and trusted friend of her uncle, at once became the friend and adviser of Mrs. Marvin. He had boarded for several years in the neighbourhood, and always made it a rule to see his old friend, the uncle of Mrs. Marvin, every day while he lived, and therefore his frequent visits to the cottage seemed a matter of course, and he soon was in the habit of passing almost every evening with the new inmates. To Mrs. Marvin this friendly intercourse was advantageous in many respects, but in none did she prize it as highly as in the assistance he rendered her in the education of Ellen. She did not subscribe to the fashionable doctrine that a young lady could complete her course of studies at sixteen or seventeen, and then ought to "come out" and display her dress and accomplishments in order to obtain a husband, which it was indispensable she should do before she was twenty, or else be considered quite *passée*, and the expense of her education (*viz.* accomplishments) as good as thrown away.

But the opinions of Mrs. Marvin on these points, her reasons for wishing that Ellen might not marry till she was, at least, twenty-five, and how the schoolmaster agreed with her opinions and strengthened her arguments, and entered into her plans of prolonging the period of lessons, till the *habit* of

improvement had become confirmed in the young lady, and how he took upon himself the direction of her studies—all these points we may, at some future time, discuss in our "Fireside Conversations." At present, we can only say that Ellen was made so happy at home, in the way which her good mother and kind guardian approved, that she showed no disposition to leave them. It was, however, generally asserted, by the beaux who failed to win her favour, that she was positively engaged to Charles Howard, and his constant visits at the cottage would have confirmed this idea had he not been a connection of the family. He was the son of Mrs. Marvin's step-brother; of course, always called her "aunt," and Ellen "cousin." Now Mrs. Marvin had quite a horror of cousins marrying together, and so also had the schoolmaster; (their reasons for this opinion we may some time give); and so the young ladies of the neighbourhood declared there could be no engagement. But they were mistaken.

Charles Howard was freshman in Harvard College when the Marvins came to reside at Roxbury. From that time, till he had completed his law studies, the cottage of his aunt was his home. Seven years had passed since he first saw Ellen, and their intercourse had been marked by the most perfect confidence, that friendship which knows no shadow of evil surmise. Could we say more to prove their mutual excellence of heart and mind, and the purity of their affection for each other? It was one of those rare examples of happy love which, in its truth, innocence and serenity, remind us

"Of Eden's bliss ere sin was known."

But no human lot can be exempt from change and care. Charles Howard is no longer a constant visitor at the cottage. He sailed last September for Europe, where he intends passing a year or more. When he returns, and Ellen reaches the prescribed age, twenty-five, we hope to describe their wedding.

"What do you think of this preaching of the 'latter day saints,' as they call themselves, that the world is to be changed or destroyed in '43?" said Mrs. Marvin, abruptly addressing the schoolmaster. She was thinking of the return of Charles Howard about that time.

"I think it is sheer nonsense, so far as naming the time is concerned," replied the schoolmaster. "The word of God expressly tells us that the time shall not be known, but come as a thief in the night. That the Millennium, or time of universal peace and supremacy of moral goodness in the world will come, appears to me evident from the history of man in his progressive improvement since the Deluge. But the manner in which it is to be wrought out, and the precise period of its commencement are mysteries which human wisdom cannot solve."

"There must be some astonishing changes in the coming year, if the world is so soon to be pre-

pared for the reign of the just," said Mrs. Marvin. "Our own country certainly seems in a sad way; banks failing, forgeries, murders and dreadful accidents fill our papers."

"You remember Aunt Dolly's favourite proverb—'It is always darkest just before day,'" said Ellen.

"The world, or rather, to speak precisely, society is in a transition state, and rapidly developing new features in political and moral as well as physical economy," said the schoolmaster. "We cannot predict what a year may bring forth; and therefore it is the more incumbent on all who wish for the triumph of truth and justice to put forth their whole strength now in this struggle between the good and evil principles of our nature. Your sex could, if they chose, turn the scale in favour of the good."

"Ah, that reminds me of your promise to write something on this subject for my especial benefit," said Ellen. "Pray let me hear it now. I see the MS. in your hand this moment."

This charge the schoolmaster could not deny, as in the earnestness of his conversation he had unconsciously taken the paper from his pocket and unfolded it;—so without any apology, except that what he had written were mere desultory thoughts, he read as follows:—

#### *"The evil of our times and its remedy."*

In this country, there being no established rank and privileged class, wealth has been found to be the surest letter of introduction into the highest and most polished circles, and the representative of power and consequence. Hence it has happened that a breathless chase after this supposed *sine qua non* of respectability and influence as the standard of *gentility* is kept up with all the interest which a concern of life and death would alone seem to warrant. The best energies of the mind are thrown into this channel, and he who is successful obtains, what is considered, an ample equivalent for days of fasting and weariness, and nights of restlessness and watchfulness, when he is acknowledged as a *rich man*!

And this haste to be rich is the evil of our times; the Upas tree, whose poison is paralyzing and destroying the life of the soul, and withering every green hope for the future. There is a cramping and debasing influence exerted by this systematic, absorbing pursuit after wealth. Let money be made the one thing needful, the all-important object of desire, and to its attainment let everything be considered poor and trifling in comparison, and the history of our Republic will, ere long, have been written. On its crumbling ruins, if it be doomed to fall, this memento as a warning to other nations will be inscribed—'*This people fell through a passionate and slavish devotion to wealth.*'"

How shall we extirpate this great and growing evil from our social system? We must trace it to

its source in the unwise and injurious systems of education, which have almost exclusively been practised among us. Here the remedy must be applied, if we would purify and correct public opinion. And here it is that our country needs the power of female talent to be exerted, the efficiency of moral training to be tested.

Let this besetting sin of our times be studiously watched by the Christian mother. Let her guard against this insidious influence of mammon. Let not *gold* be the standard value of everything. Let not childhood be taught to adjust by this alone the worth of its little joys, pursuits and friendships. We do this when we offer *money* or anything which *represents* money, as the incentive to study, or the reward of good conduct. By this defective plan, a child is early taught to place a high value on the external motive which is presented to tempt his ambition or his appetite. The nobler powers *within* his own soul are left uncultivated, or only awakened to selfish desires. He is led to look *around him* for some excitement to exertion, when in *his own mind* are principles lying dormant, which need only to be awakened and rightly directed, to carry him onward and sustain him in well-doing.

Some of these principles are the love of parents, instructors, friends, and also the love of knowledge and truth and goodness. All these may be developed and trained to vigorous exercise. And by these the youthful mind might be led onward in the paths of learning and good conduct. Then there should not be permitted in our schools those *incitements* to ambition, *medals* and *prizes*, which usually injure the heart while they stimulate the head. A fictitious value is usually placed on them by the young, and thus is often laid that foundation of the love of outward distinctions and external honours, which, to be gratified by the man or woman, requires wealth in after years.

When will men be persuaded that education commences with existence? Impressions that are stamped on the mind in its infancy, are rarely eradicated. The man receives in childhood the tone and elements of character which his after life develops; and much of what appears to be a sure indication of original depravity in human nature, may fairly be traced to some defect in the early training of the young. If every woman in our country, who now fills the awfully responsible office of *mother*, and all who, for the next twenty years, will become mothers, were qualified for their station, and faithful to perform its duties, what a revolution would be wrought in the social and moral world! What an improvement in the character of man! Then moral worth, useful talent, refined taste, and the mind's culture would be made the passport to respectability; the fashion of society would foster genius only when elevated by a virtuous life; and the highest rank would be accorded to those whose intelligence and moral worth entitled them to become exemplars of that perfection at which the world was aiming."

Here the schoolmaster discovered, somewhat to his annoyance, that he had left the last sheet of his MS. at home. Ellen was very sorry, and Mrs. Marvin begged he would give them the conclusion extempore, which she liked better than a written dissertation.

"There is nothing novel in my views on education," said the schoolmaster; "I only enforce the necessity of fixing habits of truth and feelings of justice, not in theory only, or as applied to the conduct of others, but to be at all times the rule of action for each individual. This is the grand point, to subdue or control the selfishness of the heart, to make us true and just to others, even when the balance falls against our own dear selves."

"You wish the young to be so trained, as to feel and act on the axiom that 'True self-love and social are the same,'" said Mrs. Marvin.

"Yes, I do," returned the schoolmaster, "because it would contribute to individual as well as

general happiness, to have such principles to govern us. Why, what a lesson on the folly as well as wickedness of the selfish desire to be rich at the expense of others, does the late financial events in our country teach! Do you think there is a man among the number, who have been engaged in these unwise because *unjust* speculations and schemes, who does not now wish he had pursued his own honest business in an honest manner? The mountains of prosperity, reared on the ruins of others' rights, cannot, in our age and country, long remain stable. A few swift years of fictitious wealth and greatness, what are they in comparison with the long, long days of reproach, contempt and dishonour, that await the wrong-doer! The remedy for those evils must be sought in the right training of the young. Let every mother, then, teach her sons, both by her example and precept, '*To deal justly*, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God,' and the world will be renovated."

## WILTON HARVEY.

BY MISS C. M. SEDGWICK.

## COMPOUND INTEREST.

"He that lendeth to an ignorant man, getteth him an enemy without cause; he payeth him with curses and railings; and for honour, he will pay him disgrace."

JUST at the close of the year of our Lord 18—, a man with a shuffling, lumbering tread, ascended the well-worn steps, which are the common access to half a dozen lawyers' offices in Wall-street, and turning into one, well furnished with tables and busy clerks, he, after in vain casting his eye around for the principal, inquired for 'Lawyer Gretton.'

"Mr. Gretton is in the next room," replied the head clerk. "Tell me your business; I can probably do it for you."

"No—no—you an't the man that can do my business," replied the stranger.

"Tell me what it is, and I can best judge whether I can do it or not."

"Do you say," pursued the inquirer without being repulsed by the clerk's reply, or at all daunted by his supercilious manner; "do you say Lawyer Gretton is in there?" pointing with his elbow to the inner room. The clerk had resumed his pen, and the man was obliged to repeat his question, before it was answered with a careless "Yes." The man muttered, "that he could not wait; that time was money;" and threading his way through chairs, tables, and busy students, he opened the inner door; while one of the clerks said to his neighbour,

"Burton might have known that a man with such a bullet head and high broad shoulders as that fellow's, would have his way; nothing less than a cannon-ball would stop him."

"Mr. Gretton, I am wanting to speak to you," said the stranger, for the first time taking off his hat.

"I am busy," replied Mr. Gretton, casting a careless glance at the man; "you must call again—shut the door;" the stranger lingered; "you see I am already engaged, and there are two gentlemen waiting for me."

"I suppose I can wait, too; it is a broken day, and I shall have to break another if I go, and come again."

Apparently there was something in this remark that quickened Mr. Gretton's memory, for turning his eye towards the speaker, he said, "Ah, Ross, is it you?—very well, sit down, I will attend to you as soon as I have finished with these gentlemen."

Ross was a tall, strong built, labouring man, as his dress, his hard-bound hands, and stooping shoulders indicated. His brow was prematurely

fretted into myriads of wrinkles; there was a remarkable blending of acuteness and ignorance in his face; the first indicated by the rat-like brilliancy of his deep set, piercing eye; and the ignorance most emphatically expressed by a sort of staring wonder (so to speak) in his open dropping mouth. His nose, short, flat, and broad at the nostrils, completed the far more brutish than human expression of his physiognomy.

A lawyer's office was a new scene to him, and he was intent on its revelations, and as it seemed, astounded by them, for when the clients who had preceded him were gone, he advanced eagerly to the desk, and putting his finger on a bank note which Mr. Gretton had received from one of them, he said, "Excuse me, Squire Gretton, but that is a hundred dollar note, an't it?"

"Yes, it is, Ross," replied Mr. Gretton, laying it aside in his note-book with an accustomed air.

"And won't you tell me what he meant by calling it a retainer?"

"He gives it to me, Ross, to retain me in his cause."

"That an't all!"

"Yes; that is, he makes sure of my not being employed by the opposing party, and of securing my best services."

"And that's all! You have not worked for it! have not stirred your foot—made a mark of your pen—turned over a leaf of a book; it's bounty money; when you come to do the job, you are to be paid over and above all this?"

"Certainly I am."

"Well—well—and that gentleman with the furred coat, that you talked to ten minutes; just ten by that clock there, for just the breath you spent in them ten minutes, did he pay you that fifty dollar note?"

"Yes, Ross; and now, if you please, as I take it for granted you have come for that purpose, we will look over our papers."

"There's a difference!" continued Ross, without heeding Mr. Gretton's last suggestion; "and why! can any one tell me that? Here you stand by your comfortable fire, and your very breath turns into money; and I, I to earn that hundred dollars must be up early and late; must shiver in cold days, and sweat in hot ones; must crack my bones with lifting heavy timbers; must drive nails week after week, and month after month; there's no fair play about it; it's condemned hard, and that's the end on't."

Perhaps had Mr. Gretton taken the trouble, he might, by changing his estimates, have turned the

current of Ross's feelings. Difficult as it is for a man who works with his hands to comprehend the toil and weariness of intellectual labour, Ross might have been made to understand the money value of Mr. Gretton's education; the cost in dollars and cents of those preparatory studies, which had made ten minutes of Mr. Gretton's worth months of his labour. He might possibly have understood what we believe the political economists call the accumulated capital upon which the lawyer was now receiving the income. And if he could have had a little farther insight into the anxious hours Mr. Gretton had endured during his slow approaches to his present assured condition, while he had a sickly wife, looking to him not only for bread, but for luxuries which habit had made necessities; and still farther, could he have seen in Gretton's pale brow, and sunken cheek, the curse of intense sedentary occupation, the too sure prophecy of the short career that awaits our professional men, he would have returned to his hammer and nails with a tranquillized and unenvious spirit. But thus it is. It is, for the most part, man's ignorance that makes his breast the abode of discontent, distrust in Providence, envy, and covetousness. It is out of the depths of his ignorance that come his repinings, and railings, and calls for Agrarian law.

Mr. Gretton smiled at what seemed to him merely a rhapsody, and saying, "Perhaps, my friend, you would think the play fairer if you knew more about it," he drew a paper from a file, adding; "as the year is drawing to a close I suppose you have come to see how your debt stands. Have you any prospect of paying off the mortgage?"

"Less than ever. My wife has been sick, and there's been a doctor's cursed bill to pay, and Jemmy must be dressed up for school, and that costs money again; but, for all, Jemmy shall be a lawyer if I die for't."

Mr. Gretton did not notice the ineffable grin with which this was said.

"But you have a good business," he replied; "a carpenter is sure of employment in our city, and you are an industrious man, Ross."

"God knows I am that; but it comes in at the spile and goes out at the bung. Come, Squire, you may look it over; I know pretty well how it stands; I calculate the interest that runs up each day when I go to bed at night; it amounts now to 898 dollars, 37½ cents.

Mr. Gretton smiled. "A trifle more, Ross."

"It can't be!—it can't! I've gone over it hundreds of times; I've chalked it out when I've been at my work; I've writ it down over and over; I've calculated it again and again in the night when there was nothing to take off my mind. It is 898 dollars, 37½ cents, and no more; not a fraction."

"At simple interest you are right; you forgot to calculate the compound interest."

"Compound interest!—what's that?—what's that?"

Mr. Gretton explained. Ross swore that, as he never agreed for it, he would never pay it. Mr. Gretton, who was conscious of having been forbearing, and of having waited at some pecuniary sacrifice, was provoked, and threatened to foreclose the mortgage at once, and have done with it.

Ross was calmed, not satisfied. "I have worked hard twenty years," he said; "I thought to have a house over Jemmy's head that he'd never be ashamed of. I built it with my own hands; every nail I've driv myself; and now all to go to pay that compound interest; it's too bad."

It was evident, that to Ross's apprehension the whole debt was merged in this unlooked for addition to it. Mr. Gretton pitied the man's ignorance and disappointment, and said soothingly, "You will get through with it, Ross. Pay what you can, and I'll wait for the rest. Saturday is New Year, a holiday for you and me. I will come up to Cherry-street and look at your premises, and bring the mortgage with me, and you may then make a payment; that will save you the trouble of coming to Wall-street again."

Ross merely nodded his head acquiescingly, and left the office without speaking a word. A moment after, Mr. Gretton's son, a boy of nine years, came in, his coat muddied, and his forehead bleeding. "Stanley, my boy, what is the matter?" said his father.

"Oh, nothing, sir; I am not hurt to signify. I met a horrid looking man coming down the office steps, and he ran against me and knocked me down. I know he did not see me, but he might just have said he was sorry for it."

Ross was unconscious of the offence against the boy; he was brooding over the compound interest, which seemed to him so deadly an injury. Like a good portion of the ignorant world, he could entertain but one idea at a time; that filled his field of vision; the "compound interest" seemed to him more than the original debt; and his gloomy meditations ended with a mental oath that, come what would, he would never pay Gretton a farthing of the "compound interest."

#### A HOLIDAY.

"Nature's vast frame—*The web of human things,  
Birth and the grave.*"

Stanley Gretton stood high in the first class of lawyers in New York. His father, an affluent merchant, failed just as his son was completing his education, and, in the beginning of his career, Gretton had to struggle with privations and embarrassments; but he brought talents, industry, and a manly spirit to the conflict, and conquered. He was now, at perhaps the happiest period of human life, verging on forty, with an established reputation, and a rapidly growing, and *well earned* fortune, with the strong consciousness of matured powers, and with no premonition of decay.

His wife, whose health had been fatally injured

by the loss, early in her married life, of two girls, one after the other, had recently, after a long interval, given birth to a third, who, with one son, a charming boy of nine years, filled to the brim their cup of domestic happiness.

Mrs. Gretton's confinement absolved her husband from his social dues, and he spent New Year's day, one of his few holidays, in her room. "Declarations," "conveyancings," "injunctions," "ejectments," all were forgotten in the pleasure of dandling "the little pilgrim between life and death." Never had Gretton felt a pleasure, at fixing the attention of judge and jury, to be named with that of catching the eye of this baby of three weeks. It might have comforted Ross to have looked in and seen that the holiest joys of the rich and the poor were of the same nature, on the same level.

"This is the happiest New-Year's day of my life, Mary," said Mr. Gretton to his wife. "Your health promises to be better than it has been for many a day. Our sad losses are in a measure made up to us in this dear little girl. Stanley is not a boy to be ashamed of," exchanging glances with the bright boy who stood at the bed-side caressing the baby; "the clouds have blown away, and the future looks very bright to me." Mrs. Gretton had not the hopeful disposition of her husband; sorrow and ill health had dimmed those bright tints on her horizon that promise happy days to come. She sighed, and said the future did not look so bright to her. "I don't know why," she added, "perhaps it is because whenever happiness is but spoken of, I feel the void left by my dead children; but, besides, my dear husband, I am afraid you are working too hard. The gray hairs, Stanley, are stealing in among the black, and it seems to me the lines in your face are every day deepening."

Mrs. Gretton thus gave her husband an opening, which he had been for some time seeking, for a communication that he rather dreaded to make. There always seemed to her a great preponderance of danger in risk of every kind, and she was nervously susceptible on anything approaching to what is called speculation in the trafficking world. After a little preliminary hemming, Mr. Gretton began:—"To tell you the truth, Mary, I do feel my office business to be wearing on me, and I mean soon to give myself a long holiday. I am not going to be a slave to business much longer. I am taking a cross-cut to Dame Fortune's temple; you look alarmed—now for your old bug-bear, Mary—your horror of speculation."

"Rather a reasonable horror, since both our fathers were ruined by it. I have always told you that I can content myself with the most humble fortune. I do not desire wealth for myself, nor for my children. We have been happy—we *are* happy without it; in truth we have more of it than we need; then what temptation is there to adventure on an uncertain, troubled sea?"

"The sea is of your own creation, Mary, and

all its dangers of your own imagining. My voyage is to be a short and a very safe one, and if I am disappointed in the end of it, no dishonour can ensue. I am but where I began—I have enough to pay all the debts I have contracted. My profession will be left to me, and thank Heaven, that yields me enough to content any man."

"Then why not be contented?"

"I say so, too, father," echoed his boy, "I am sure we have everything in the world to make us contented."

Mr. Gretton was silenced for a moment; he looked at his wife and children; wherever he turned his eye he saw the signs of comfort and affluence; he felt that the incense of contentment should rise from his domestic altar; and a stern voice within his breast told him he had been indulging unreasonable and sordid desires. But self-love is full of subtlety; it wraps itself in its own vaporous exhalations, and winding about its tortuous path, escapes the direct pursuit of conscience. "We have enough in our worldly condition for contentment, certainly," resumed Mr. Gretton, "for contentment and gratitude; but if an opportunity of improving my fortune falls in my way, I cannot think it wise to step aside to avoid it. I am tired seeing other people seize golden occasions that I have let slip through my fingers. Now, Mary, you know if I had taken your Uncle Henry's opinion, and joined him in his cotton speculation, I should have been as rich a man as he was."

"Yes, Stanley, and if you had yielded to his entreaties, and ventured in his gold mine speculation, you would be as poor as he *is*."

Mr. Gretton was absorbed in recalling his missings, and did not heed his wife's rejoinder.

"And if I had purchased those lots in Hudson Square," he continued, "that were offered to me five years ago, I should now be a rich man."

"And what an escape you had in not joining in that tempting purchase of the Swanton lots. They would have swallowed up all our present competency. I know I am no judge of business matters, but these modes of getting rich appear to me but gambling under another name. You do not pay any labour for the acquisition; you do not give any equivalent for it; you throw the dice, and it is all a chance whether it be gain or loss."

"And I can't, for my part," interposed young Stanley, who was allowed to mix in the little domestic discussions of his parents, "I can't see what you want to gain for, father. Since we have got a little child, I can't think of anything we want; and it was only this morning mother said she wanted nothing but a cradle, and Doctor Morton laughed and said, 'happy woman! even that is a superfluity, for your baby is much better without it.'"

Mr. Gretton felt rather annoyed with the secret conviction that his wife and boy, the weaker party, as his manly estimation deemed them, had the better of him in the argument, and he rallied



to overhwhelm with a torrent of reasons the stream that, if clear, he thought shallow. "Come here, my boy," he said, "I am delighted to find your mother so satisfied, and you as moderate in your desires as if you were seventy instead of nine."

"I am not so very moderate, father, but it seems to me, now I've got my sister, that we have every thing we want; that is just the fact of it; and who can be richer than we are? Why we would not take the world and a hundred worlds on the top of it for that little mite of a baby."

"We are rich, and you are wise, my son; but, perhaps, not so much wiser, as you think, than your father. Now listen to me, and I will tell you why I should like to enlarge my fortune."

"Well, sir, I am listening," he replied, stroking his cheek with the baby's soft little hand, and then, self-convicted of his utter engrossment with his new treasure, he quitted her side, and came to his father—"I mean I will listen, sir," he added.

"Thank you; to begin then, I am tired of my profession."

"Your profession! my dear husband!" exclaimed his wife, "I thought you loved it."

"And so I do, and honour it, but in this city there is no controlling the amount of your business; it rolls up like a snow-ball, and never melts away; I am overburdened; I have no time for my family, for my friends, for society."

"But you had, when you limited yourself to your office business; it is only within the last few months that you have brought home maps, and drafts, and accounts to study till late at night."

"Oh, of course, for a while I must have trouble with this concern; I am the only lawyer in it, and there are nice legal points to be investigated. But there is no tedious process of sowing the seeds and waiting for the harvest; the golden harvest is ready to our hand."

"Now you have come to the point, father; what do you mean to do with it when it is all reaped?"

"I mean to go and see the old world with my family."

"With your *family*! Oh, how pleasant it is to go or stay, now we can call ourselves a little family."

"Yes, my son, with my family. You sigh, Mary, and are thinking, as you often say, that home is the only place for an invalid; but you have yet to learn the power of money. In Europe it will procure every comfort and luxury; and when we are sated with travelling, we will return and quit this toilsome, artificial, city life, and have a country-place, and fill it with the adornments we will bring home with us. Neither, my dear boy, do all my projects begin and end in ourselves. I have good friends, worthy people whom I want to aid, and cannot as I would now. And Mary, I believe it is not vanity that tells me I can do something better than plod in my office. I should like to serve my country; there are objects that I have at heart; I would do something to be remembered."

There was a generosity bordering on greatness in Mr. Stanley's interpretation of his desires that silenced his wife. She was a pattern of conjugal deference, very apt to feel the divinity stirring within her husband, and to be herself obedient to its intimations. The boy was silent, too, but he looked perplexed rather than satisfied.

"Do you understand me, my son?" asked his father.

"Oh, yes sir, I understand you—but!"

"But what!—speak out fairly my boy—you and I are sworn friends you know—I open my heart to you, and you should open yours to me."

"Well sir, I was only thinking—don't you remember, father, one evening when Mr. Jones and Mr. Smith were here talking of stocks, and lots, and so on—of who had made money, and who had lost it—that when they went away you said you were very tired, and it was such vulgar conversation, and I don't remember exactly what you said, but it seemed to me you was very much against riches, father. You said it was not the rich men who were the benefactors of their race; I remember this, because you made me write down a list, and I have the list yet, in my little old yellow pocket-book; it began with Washington and Franklin, and you laughed and said they were not half as rich as Mr. Jones, or Mr. Smith—so I was just thinking, father, you might 'serve your country—do something to be remembered,' as you said, without being a rich man."

It can never be known how much the father's right suggestions, from an unclouded mind thus unexpectedly returned upon him, might have wrought upon him. The conversation was interrupted by the entrance of a servant with a note. "How odd!" said Stanley, "a note on brown paper!—oh, do let me see it, father." He spoke too late—the paper was already in the fire; a scrawl on which hung life and death!

"It's nothing, my son," replied his father, "merely a word to remind me of a promise I made to see a man on business this afternoon."

"This afternoon! Cannot we have one holiday free from business?"

"Excuse me this time, Mary. This appointment is not quite in the regular way of business; I made it to save a poor whimsical fellow's time, or rather his feelings, for he grudges every minute that does not turn into money; one of my fellow-worshippers of the god Mammon—you are thinking—but you shall hold a better opinion of me one of these days. Come along with me, Stanley; we will get our afternoon's walk out of it, and be back to your mother's tea. Now pray, dear Mary," he added, turning back, "don't brood over my speculation. I have not seen you look sad before since your girl was born, and I reproach myself for it; take heart of grace, my child, if worst comes to worst and I fail, I hurt no one but myself—I can pay every debt I have incurred, I have still my profession, and I give you my solemn promise that as this is my first it shall be my last speculation—to

tell you the truth, you and Stanley have already made me half ashamed of it. I believe you are wiser, Mary, as you certainly are better than I am."

"Oh, if I appear troubled, Stanley, it is only because I am so happy now, that I dread any change; I shall be perfectly satisfied with whatever you think best," she concluded reverting to her customary state of passive acquiescence; as if there could be stability in this world, the very essence and condition of it being change.—But so even the timid lend themselves to the delusion of security, forgetting that the most frightful storms gather in the brightest days.

We have done Stanley Gretton injustice if we have given the impression that he was a lover of money, or covetous of gain; he was neither, but a man of pure heart and lofty purpose, desiring the acquisition of riches only for the power they give to effect good and generous objects. If he over-estimated their power, and mistook the mode of pursuing them, it was because he had caught the disease that infected the atmosphere in which he lived; the disease to which all actively commercial countries are liable, as the physical atmosphere is to the visitation of influenza and measles.

Mr. Gretton and his son pursued their course up Broadway. The New-Year's day is an affecting anniversary, one of those eminences in human life from which we naturally look before and after; and, taking this survey, Mr. Gretton's heart overflowed with a quiet joy from the sense of security in the possession of God's best gifts. The course of his reflections was manifest in his conversation with his boy; he told him of his struggles with poverty in his youth—of his self-dependence—of the happiness of success resulting from courageous effort. His sentiments, his very words, from subsequent circumstances, were remembered, and probably were more effective on his son's after conduct than volumes of moral precepts given on ordinary occasions. The days were at their shortest, and they were delayed for a quarter of an hour by a friend who stopped Mr. Gretton to consult him on business. As they parted, "you had best turn back, Stanley, with Mr. Miller," said his father—"it's getting late, and every minute will seem an hour to your mother, while we are both gone. I shall be back in time for her tea—if I am not, tell her not to wait for me."

Thus they parted, the father walking rapidly off in one direction, the son running in the other with the light heart and feet of childhood, neither father nor son feeling the slightest premonition of what awaited them—not one of those obscure anxieties that, arising spontaneously from the sadness of human experience, are afterwards interpreted into the shadows of coming events.

"Is my sister asleep?" asked Stanley, bursting into his mother's room.

"No," replied his mother, smiling at the dignified designation of the little morsel of humanity in her arms, "but where is your father?"

"In Cherry-street, I suppose. It was Cherry-

street, was not it, he said he was going to? It was so late he sent me back, and I was so afraid of finding the baby asleep that I have run all the way, so he'll not be here this long while—my father said you must not wait tea for him. Mother, how long will it be before my sister will sit up at the table with us! then we shall have one for each side of the table, and I can sit opposite to her where I can always look at her—oh, mother! mother! I can't tell you how happy I am! I have got a sister, is the first thought when I wake in the morning, and the last at night; to tell you the truth, mother, if it were not for you and father, I would rather we were poor than rich, for if we were poor I could work for her day and night, and teach her and serve her, but now if father gets his great fortune, I can do nothing for her."

"Never fear, my dear boy, love is the spirit's food, and, rich or poor, your love will be your sister's best treasure." Stanley continued to pour out his full heart, and for a while the mother was absorbed in her children, but after a little time she began to wonder her husband did not return. The servant came twice unbidden to ask if he should bring the tea things, and Mrs. Gretton, remembering it was his holiday evening, told him to arrange the tea-service, and go; and there it remained untouched. The fond brother sat down by the nurse, and unsuspecting of any possible danger to his father, he laid his head on her knee and fell asleep with his cheek touching the baby's: thence he was removed, in most happy unconsciousness of impending evil, to bed. The tea-kettle continued its wearisome song till the last coal in the chafing-dish died away. The nurse having secured her own tea, remonstrated against Mrs. Gretton deferring her's, repeating that aphorism so satisfactory to the unanxious, so vexing to the fearful, "there's no use in worrying, ma'am, nothing can have happened; I wish ma'am knew some folks' husbands; there's one of my ladies—I don't mention her name, for I make it a principle never to tell secrets of families where I nurse—but ma'am can guess; it ain't far off; he's never home till after 12 o'clock; and there's Mrs. Upham—oh, that's a slip, I did not mean to mention her name—she never thinks of asking if her husband is at home or not; to be sure, it's a comfort to have a regular husband like Mr. Gretton, but then it makes one dreadful anxious, so it has its disadvantages." Nurse's buzzing, as may be supposed, had rather a tendency to increase Mrs. Gretton's restlessness, but never dreaming that possible, she continued: "Ma'am don't consider its New-Year's night, and the city is full of parties; Mr. Gretton has run into some friend's house, and time, as it were, runs away much faster with a husband abroad, than with a wife sick at home."

Even this equivocal comfort Mrs. Gretton would gladly have received, if she could, as the evening wore on, and hour after hour struck. Ten, eleven, twelve came, and the nurse insisted with professional authority on the poor lady composing her-

The candles were extinguished, the night-lamp lighted, and the attendant laid herself down and realized Sancho's description of sleep; for sleep and the blanket covered her at the same moment. But there was no sweet approach of sleep to the alarmed wife as she lay listening to the signal sounds of the wasting night; the quick tread of people hastening to their homes; the roll of carriages returning from parties; the loud voices of festive rioters dying away in the distance. To these succeeded the awful eloquent silence that wraps the thronged city at the dead of night, interrupted only by the watchman's rattle suggesting the evil things that are prowling about the unconscious and defenceless.

Poor Mary Gretton! All the nerves in her body seemed resolved into the sense of hearing. Every three minutes she raised her head from the pillow, and laid it throbbing down. She drew her baby close to her bosom, and tried to calm herself with its soft breathings; the beating of its little heart seemed rather to excite her nerves, and again she laid it from her; and though she had not put her foot to the ground since her confinement, she rose from her bed, crept to the window, raised the sash, and thrusting her head out, gazed up and down the street as if her look could bring the desired object. But he came not, and she shrank shivering back to bed, and finally, towards morning, she sunk to sleep, faintly hoping that possibly, for one moment, she had lost herself, and during that moment, that her husband had come in, and with his usual, but now most ill-timed considerateness, had gone noiselessly to his own apartment. She started with the first ray of light, and waking the nurse, begged her to go instantly and see if Mr. Gretton were in his room. He was not; there was no sign of him there; "but," the nurse added, after having given this dismaying intelligence, "I dare say, after all, Patrick turned the bolt of the street door when he came in last night. What a goose I was I did not think of that before." Mrs. Gretton said she had given him express orders not to touch it, but bade her go instantly and see. She did so, and returned, looking, herself, pale and frightened. We know not how, in our weakness, we lean even on the weakest reeds. The nurse's alarm now redoubled her mistress's. She sprang out of bed and rang the bell violently and repeatedly, while the nurse was exclaiming, "Gracious me, ma'am, are you crazy! You'll get your death of cold; you'll bring back your old complaints worse than ever. I never, never! Ma'am, I can't be answerable for the consequences." But not one word did Mary Gretton heed. "He does not hear," she cried; "call him!" "Patrick—no, Stanley. Stanley! Stanley! he'll go quicker. Oh, here is Patrick! Go, Patrick, for my brother—for Mr. Wilton Harvey; tell him my husband is—no, tell him to come to me—go, for God's sake, go!" The household were now all astir, and all thoroughly alarmed. Mrs. Gretton rushed into her boy's apartment, adjoining hers, and terrifying

him almost out of his senses with the apparition of his mother, almost out of bed, wild and haggard, with her hair streaming over her shoulders, she communicated the cause of her distress. The boy, thus suddenly awakened, caught his mother's panic, and expressed his terror in cries and shrieks; but he soon recovered a most characteristic self-possession, that calmness which comes from inward power and devotion to others, and which sometimes manifests itself in early childhood. "Dear mother," he said, "don't be so frightened; nothing has happened; I hope father was kept out late, and went to my Uncle Wilton's to sleep. Dear mother, how you are shaking; get back into bed; thank you, mother, now you will lie quiet while I am gone." Thus entreating and soothing, he calmed her in some degree, and bidding the nurse do everything to warm and compose her, he was dressed and out of the house in half a minute. But warm or quiet she could not be made, and her brother found her out of bed, and walking the room like a maniac. Other friends came, and everything was said and done that the kindest zeal could suggest or execute. The most thorough search was instituted. A thousand conjectures were made, and the next hour proved them fallacious. Placards were issued, and advertisements sent to the evening papers. Mr. Gretton's clerks were examined, and his office-papers ransacked for some clue to the person to whom he had gone to do business. Stanley remembered he had spoken of Cherry-street, but no reference among his papers could be found to that street. The head-clerk recalled the ill-looking fellow who had so sturdily insisted on seeing Mr. Gretton, but he had never been seen at the office before or since; and there was no reason but his ill-omened visage for fixing suspicion on him. Mr. Gretton was not known to have an enemy, or a controversy with any one. Day passed after day, week after week, and month after month, and no tidings came of the good citizen, the devoted husband, the fond father, who went forth full of projects and hopes, well-earned honour, and well-founded assurance of a holiday afternoon in a well-ordered city to do some ordinary business. That he had suffered by violent hands none at the time doubted. Subsequently, when the speculation in which he had taken part utterly failed, when his whole fortune was wrecked in it, and the reputation of some of the parties concerned was implicated, it was suggested that Mr. Gretton had foreseen this, and not having courage to face the issue, he had voluntarily withdrawn from life. None who knew him well cast this shadow on his memory, but to few can a man be so intimately known as to defy suspicion. Mr. Gretton had mixed himself up with men of lax morality. These men had corruptly speculated on the covetousness and credulity of the public at a time of feverish pecuniary excitement, and a man who had adventured simply with the hope of doing good, and blessing others by the acquisition of money he did not want, had lost a competency earned by ho-

nourable labour, had left an impoverished family, and a blemished memory. This, with slight variations, is the history of many honest, industrious, but most fatally deluded men, during the monetary fevers in our cities.

That "little family," on which the New Year had dawned so auspiciously, in whose very name young Stanley had taken such innocent delight, was broken up for ever; God's happiest temple on earth, a virtuous home, made most desolate. Whose was the crime, and where the criminal, was to remain a dreadful mystery! The exposure on that dreadfully anxious night, and the despair that

followed, were too much for the susceptible frame of Mary Gretton. She languished a few weeks, and died. Stanley and the baby-sister, whose birth had been hailed with such love and promise, were adopted into the family of their mother's young brother, Wilton Harvey, a most kind and generous man, who had just happily begun his commercial career in the city.

We conclude this prefatory part of our story with the words of the wise man, sad in our application of them as they are wise: "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house."

Written for the Ladies' Garland.

## ENVY AND REVENGE.

BY MERCY SHELDON.

When I cast the eye of the mind over the vast ocean of time, as connected with the omnipotent existence of the Almighty, I can discern, in plain and legible characters, the following legacy bequeathed and secured to the little ones of the Great Shepherd's flock—truth will prevail, and envy and revenge will assuredly meet their just reward.

Envy and revenge were the moving passions of Satan when he sought, with a tongue smoothed with the oil of flattery, and lips that were a burning echo of guile and falsehood, to tempt our first parents from the path of duty and detach their affections from the God that created them, while he covered them and their posterity with sin, ignominy, and shame.

Since that eventful period, the temptations to indulge the passions, which are natural to all mankind, has been so easily and universally accomplished, that Satan is not under the necessity of occupying the low and contemptible habitation of a reptile, but has found, and still finds, easy access to that image of the Almighty—*man*.

We need only look back upon past ages, and around us at present, to feel, with overwhelming force, that the two most powerful passions that actuate the wicked to deeds of bloodshed, treachery, and crime, are envy and revenge. But we can also see, that there has been and will be those, that, by a strict adherence to the principles of truth and love, will rise above and put under their feet these evil passions and sinful propensities.

This should be, and is, a consolation to the wronged and oppressed, to the truthful and the lovers of truth; and the dark fiery waves of falsehood and deceit, emanating from the hearts of Satan's followers, will eventually roll back with overwhelming judgments, to bury beneath the wrath and justice of Jehovah's indignation, the envious, the revenge-

ful, and the professor of religion, that, from a spirit of malice, envy or revenge, will stoop to falsehood, deceit and calumny, to injure and detract from the merit of the innocent and worthy, and impress the stamp of their own evil conduct on the guiltless and just.

Much has been written on the virtues and angel-like qualities of the female character, and wit and wisdom might be exchanged without fully enumerating and expressing the amiable qualities and praiseworthy deeds of one portion of the female sex, while it would be as difficult to delineate, in plain and correct ideas, the wickedness, the depravity, and disgusting vices of a certain portion, that are looked upon by the world as the elite of fashion and grandeur.

I have seen the female, blest with opportunities for improving in all the refinements of mental, moral, and religious cultivation, sacrificing her beauty, her talents, her worth, and influence, at the altar of envy and revenge. If she met with another more beautiful, more wealthy, or more highly favored of fortune in any one particular, she would not hesitate to aim at her reputation the poisoned shafts of slander, and envy is not slow to invent, nor afraid to execute. Even the church member, the professed follower of Christ's example, I have known to indulge in this unhallowed sin, and who, by the nicely polished profession of sincerity and goodness, attempt, by the outward parade of almsgiving and church attending, to ride to heaven on flowery beds of ease, without cherishing or abiding by any of the principles that constitute the christian character, *truth love, charity, justice*.

Borne along by their own evil passions, when they meet with worth and virtue, combined with the principles of truth and justice, they cannot but discern their own inferiority; but instead of adopting the course that their judgment admires, which secures to others all the better and more exalted qualities of intellectual worth and christian excellence, they attempt, by the grovelling spirit of envy and revenge, to build up their own tottering credit on the downfall and ruin of their innocent victim.

It is painful to see these vices prevail to so great an extent, and among that portion of the female sex who profess to be patterns of meekness and piety, without one apparent desire or effort to overcome them. In the dark ages of pagan superstition, revenge was sanctioned by public opinion; but even then was its curse more lightly felt than in this enlightened age, and especially in our privileged country, where general knowledge is placed within the reach of all, and the principles of christianity are so universally and extensively circulated. Then it was openly

accomplished, now it is treacherously and deceitfully effected. How many a virtuous character has been traduced—how many noble and generous hearts have been grieved—how many confiding and unsuspecting friends have been pained, by some revengeful or envious associate, who could not make them bow with themselves at the shrine of falsehood and flattery.

These practices become in time a seated habit, subversive of that charity and love our Saviour commanded us to observe and possess. It is a prevailing sin of our age, and those that do not overcome it will eventually fall, and great will be the fall thereof. We must master the feelings that would prompt us to revenge, and school our affections to christian forbearance and love; then envy, with its train of evil attendants, will flee the heart over which it has reigned, and in its stead will spring up the peaceable fruits of righteousness, which establishes in the mind independence of thought, and firmness of character; a love for truth, and fearlessness to advocate it when we see it denied and *abused*.

Brutus, Cayuga Co., N. Y.

## ERROR.

BY MRS. EMMA C. EMBURY, AUTHOR OF "CONSTANCE LATIMER," ETC.  
*Graham's Lady's and Gentleman's Magazine* (1841-1842); Aug 1842; VOL. XXI., No. 2.;  
American Periodicals  
pg. 83

## E R R O R .

BY MRS. EMMA C. EMBURY, AUTHOR OF "CONSTANCE LATIMER," ETC.

"Pause, heedless mortal, and reflect—this day,  
This very hour—nay, yesterday, mayhap,  
Thou mayst have done what cannot be recalled,  
And steeped thy future years in darkest night.  
Some trivial act or word, now quite forgot,  
May have impelled the iron wheels of fate,  
Which onward roll to crush thee in their course."

ONE of the most beautiful of the many lovely villages which lie within the foldings of the Connecticut river is Elmsdale. Occupying a small peninsula, round which the stream winds so closely that at the first view it seems entirely separated from the main land, and lying aside from the highroad which traverses the valley of the Connecticut, Elmsdale is one of the most quiet and sequestered spots to be found in New England. Like most places which offer no inducement to the spirit of speculation, the village is inhabited chiefly by the descendants of those who had first settled there. The old men have been companions in boyhood, and have sported in the same fields which now echo to the merry shouts of their grandchildren. The most of them still cultivate the farms which belonged to their forefathers, and even the adventurous few, who have been tempted to go out into the world beyond, usually return to finish their days on their native soil.

The arrival of a stranger in a retired village is always a subject of curiosity and interest, but in a place like Elmsdale, where every body knew his neighbor, such an unusual event excited special attention. When, therefore, it was known throughout the hamlet that a strange lady had come to pass the summer with old farmer Moody, all the gossips were on the alert to find out who she could be. But they derived little satisfaction from their skilful questioning of the farmer; all he knew was soon told. The lady was travelling for health, and having been pleased with the situation of his comfortable abode, had applied to be received as a boarder during the summer months, offering to pay liberally in advance. Her evident ill-health, her gentle manners, and the temptation of her ready gold prevailed on the thrifty farmer to assent, and the stranger took possession of a neat chamber in his pleasant cottage.

Close to the bank of the river, on a little eminence commanding a view of the country around Elmsdale, stood a singularly constructed stone building which had long been unoccupied and deserted. Its original owner and projector was a man of singular habits, whose eccentricity had been universally regarded as a species of harmless insanity. Rich and childless, he had erected this mansion according to his own

ideas of gothic architecture, and nothing could be more grotesque than its whole appearance. It soon obtained the appellation of Hopeton's Folly, and though he whose name it bore had long since occupied a narrower house in the silent land, and the property had passed into other hands, the deserted mansion was still known by the same title. Great was the surprise of the villagers when it was known that the strange lady had become the purchaser of Hopeton's Folly, and that in future she would reside permanently in Elmsdale. Curiosity was newly awakened, and every body was desirous to know something about one who seemed so unprotected and solitary. But there was a quiet dignity in her manners which rebuked and disconcerted impertinent inquiry, while all efforts to draw some information from her single attendant—an elderly sedate woman, who seemed to hold a middle rank between companion and servant—were equally unsuccessful.

"Has Mrs. Norwood been long a widow?" asked a pertinacious newsmonger, who kept the only thread and needle shop in the place, and therefore had a fine opportunity of gratifying her gossiping propensities.

"It is now nearly two years since she lost her husband," was the reply of the discreet servant, who was busily employed in selecting some tape and pins.

"Only two years, and she has already laid aside her mourning!" exclaimed the shopkeeper; "but I suppose that is an English fashion."

The woman made no reply, and, consequently, the next day, all the village was given to understand that Mrs. Norwood's *help* had told Miss Debby Tatle that Mrs. Norwood was a very rich widow who had just arrived from England. This was all that Miss Debby's ingenuity could make out of the scanty materials which she had been able to obtain, and with this meagre account people were obliged to be satisfied.

Mrs. Norwood was one of those quiet, gentle beings who, though little calculated to excite a sudden prepossession, always awakened a deep and lasting interest. Her age might have been about eight and twenty, but the ravages of illness, and, perhaps, the touch of a still more cruel destroyer, had given a

melancholy expression to her countenance, and a degree of gravity to her manners which made her seem much older. Her features, still classically beautiful, were attenuated and sharpened, her complexion was pale almost to ghastliness, and her thin, flexible lips were perfectly colorless. But she possessed one charm which neither time nor disease could spoil. Her eyes—those dark, soft, lustrous eyes, with their veined and fringed lids, beautiful alike when the full orbs were veiled beneath their shadowy lashes, or when their beaming light turned full upon an object of regard—were the most distinguishing trait in Mrs. Norwood's countenance. No one dreamed of calling her beautiful, but all noticed the grace of her tall and slightly bending figure, her courteous and ladylike manners, her low, sweet voice, and the touching air of melancholy which seemed to characterize her every movement.

Under the direction of its new mistress, Hopeton's Folly was now fitted up with a degree of neatness and comfort which it had seemed scarcely capable of assuming. Furniture, plain but costly, was brought from a distant town, the grounds were laid out with a view to elegance rather than mere usefulness, and, in short, money and good taste soon converted the desolate spot into a little paradise of beauty. The neighbors, who, with the kindness which generally prevails in every place where fashion has not destroyed social feeling, had been ready to afford Mrs. Norwood every assistance in the completion of her plans, became now equally ready to share her hospitality, and, for a time, the newly arranged mansion was always full of well-disposed but ill-judging visitors. But Mrs. Norwood's health was soon made the plea for discountenancing all such attentions on the part of the village gossips. Always courteous and hospitable, she yet declined all visitations to the frequent "*hot water conventions*" or "*tea drinkings*" which constituted the chief amusement of the place, while she managed to keep alive the good feelings of her new associates by many acts of unostentatious charity. Simple in her daily habits, benevolent in her impulses, yet retiring and reserved in her manners, Mrs. Norwood made her faithful old servant the almoner of her bounties, while the poor, the sick and the sorrowful were never refused admission to her presence. Her regular attendance on the public duties of religion, in the only church which Elmsdale could then boast, had tended to establish her character for respectability in a community so eminently moral and pious; and when it was known that the pastor, whose rigid ideas of propriety were no secret, had become a frequent visitor at Hopeton's Folly, no doubt remained as to Mrs. Norwood's virtues and claims upon general sympathy.

Mr. Allston, who for some ten years had presided over the single church in a place which had fortunately escaped the curse of sectarianism, was a man as remarkable in character as he was peculiar in habit. A close and unwearied student, ascetic in his daily life, and an enthusiast in his profession, he was almost idolized by his people, who regarded him as a being of the most saint-like character. Indeed,

if self-denial could afford a title to canonization, he was fully competent to sustain the claim; but such is the inconsistency of human judgment, that Mr. Allston owed his high reputation to a belief in his stoical indifference to earthly temptations, and much of his influence would have been diminished if it had been suspected that resistance to evil ever cost him a single effort. The truth was that nature had made Allston a voluptuary, but religion had transformed him into an ascetic. He had set out in life with an eager thirst after all its pleasures, but he had been stayed in the very outset of his career by the reproaches of an awakened conscience. Violent in all his impulses, and ever in extremes, he had devoted himself to the gospel ministry because the keen goadings of repentance urged him to offer the greatest sacrifice in his power as atonement for past sins. But he had experienced all the trials which await those who, when gathering the manna from heaven, still remember the savory fleshpots of Egypt. His life was a perpetual conflict between passion and principle, and though his earthly nature rarely obtained the mastery, yet the necessity for such unwearied watchfulness had given a peculiar tone of severity to his manners. Like many persons of similar zeal, Allston had committed the error of confounding the *affections* with the *passions* of human nature, and believing all earthly ties to be but fetters on the wings of the soul, he carefully avoided all temptation to assume such bonds. His religion was one of fear rather than of love, and forgetting that He who placed man in a world of beauty and delight has said, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," he made existence only a protracted scene of self-devotion and privation. A superstitious dread of yielding even to the most innocent impulses had induced him to suppress every feeling of his ardent and excitable nature. He had turned from the face of beauty and the voice of love with the same dread as would have induced him to eschew the temptation of the gaming-table and the wine-cup, and his thirtieth summer found him still a solitary student by the fireside of his widowed mother. His fine talents as a preacher, his powers of persuasion, his thrilling eloquence, aided by the example of his own habits of life, had produced a great effect in the community where he had been called to minister in holy things. The church was in a most flourishing condition; numbers had been united to it, and the influence of the pastor over the minds of all, but especially those of the young, was almost unbounded. Is it strange, therefore, that spiritual pride should have grown up in the heart of the isolated student, and twined its parasitic foliage around many a hardy plant of grace and goodness? Is it to be wondered at if Charles Allston at length indulged the fancy that he had been set apart as one chosen for a high and holy work—that he was destined to be one of the "vessels of honor," of whom St. Paul has spoken—and that nothing now could sully the spotless garments in which his self-denial had clothed him.

Mrs. Allston had been among the first to welcome the sick stranger to Elmsdale, and, pleased with the



gentle grace which characterized her manners, had lavished upon her every kindness. Mrs. Norwood was grateful for her attentions, and seemed happy to find a friend whose mature age and experience could afford her counsel and sympathy. This feeling of childlike dependence, on the one hand, and matronly affection on the other, was growing up between them, and served to establish a closer intimacy than at first might have appeared natural to persons so entirely unlike in character. Mrs. Allston was a woman of unpretending good sense, and plain education, whose rustic habits and utter indifference to etiquette made her appear very different from the languid invalid whose elegant manners and refined language marked her cultivation rather than her strength of mind. But "accident," and "the strong necessity of loving," may often account for friendships as well as loves, and this world would be a sad desert of lonely hearts if we could only attach ourselves to our own counterparts. No one could know Mrs. Norwood intimately, without being irresistibly attracted towards a character of such singular sensitiveness and amiability. She seemed like one in whom the elements of strength had been slowly and gradually evolved by circumstances, for, though her disposition was by nature yielding and dependent, yet her habits of thought and action were full of decision and firmness. Gentle and feminine in her feelings, reserved and quiet in her demeanor, she appeared to a careless observer merely as the dignified and discreet, because unprotected woman. But one who looked beneath the calm surface, might have found a deep strong under-current of feeling. Heart-sickness, rather than bodily disease, had been at work with her, and the blight which had passed over her young beauty, was but a type of that which had checked the growth of her warm affections.

Whatever might have been Mrs. Norwood's feelings when she first took possession of her new abode, she certainly seemed both healthier and happier after a year's sojourn in Elmsdale. A faint color returned to her thin cheek, a smile, bright and transient as an April sunbeam, often lit up her fine face, her features lost much of their sharpness of outline, and gradually, almost imperceptibly, the feeble, drooping invalid was transformed by the renovating touch of health into the lovely and elegant woman. Yet the same pensiveness characterized her usual manner—the same reluctance to mingle in society was evident in her daily intercourse with her neighbors, and to a stranger she might still seem to be mourning over the memory of a buried affection. But Mrs. Allston and her son alone knew better. They alone knew that affection had been crushed in its very bud by unkindness and neglect—they alone believed that the widow had found death one of the best of friends, when he relieved her from the intolerable bondage of domestic tyranny. Not that Mrs. Norwood had ever confided to them her former history; for the slightest question which had reference to the past always seemed to give her exquisite pain, but a casual remark, a trifling hint, a passing allusion, uttered in the con-

fidence of friendship, had led them to form such conclusions.

Allston had at first regarded the stranger merely as another member added to his flock—another soul for which he must hereafter be responsible. But a closer acquaintance with her awakened a much stronger interest in his mind. He fancied that her character bore a wonderful resemblance to his own. He thought he beheld in her the same secret control over strong emotions, the same silent devotion to deep-felt duties, the same earnest enthusiasm in religion, the same abstraction from worldly pleasures, as had long been the leading traits in his character. He believed that the difference of sex and her early sorrow might account for the diversities which existed between them, and actuated by the belief that he was an instrument in the hands of a higher Power, who had destined him for some great and glorious work, he persuaded himself that Providence had placed her in his path and pointed her out to him, by a mysterious sympathy, as his companion and fellow-laborer in his future duties. Had he not been blinded by the self-reliance which had taken the place of his wonted watchfulness, the very strength of his feelings would have led him to distrust their propriety. But habit had rendered all his ordinary practice of self-denial so easy to him that he fancied himself quite superior to mere earthly temptation, and therefore he was disposed to regard his present excitement, rather as a manifestation of the will of Heaven than as an impulse of natural affection. It cost him much thought and many severe conflicts with his doubts and his zeal ere he could decide upon the course he should pursue. Determined not to listen to the voice of passion but to be governed entirely by a sense of duty, he condemned himself to a rigorous fast of three days in the firm belief that he should receive some expression of the Divine Will. In the deep sleep of exhaustion which fell upon him during the third night, Mrs. Norwood appeared before him in a dream, wearing shining garments and smiling with an expression of perfect beatitude. This was enough for the wild enthusiast. From that moment he placed no restraint upon the promptings of his heart, but considering her as one peculiarly marked out for the same high destiny as himself, he poured out all the fulness of his long hoarded affections at her feet.

Lonely, desolate and sorrowful, Mrs. Norwood was almost bewildered by the sudden light which seemed to break in upon her when she thus found herself the object of true tenderness. She had long admired the genius of Mr. Allston, and her romantic temperament peculiarly fitted her to appreciate the peculiarities of his enthusiastic zeal. She had looked up to him as one as far above her in his unworldly sanctity, as in his gifted intellect, and thus to find herself the chosen of a heart which had heretofore rejected earth's sweetest gifts of tenderness, was most unlooked-for happiness. She soon learned to love him with a depth and fervor which surprised even herself, yet she had suffered so much in early life that the presence of hope was now welcomed

with tearful distrust. She dreaded rather than anticipated the future, and while listening to the wrapt eloquence of her lover, who seemed to spiritualize the impassioned language of affection, she could not but tremble to think what a blank life would be if this new-found bliss were suddenly extinguished. The peculiar tone of Allston's mind was never more distinctly displayed than in his courtship. Of love he never spoke, but he dwelt on the high and mystical dreams which had charmed his solitude, he pictured passion under the garb of pure devotion, and attired human affections in the robes of immaculate purity until he had completely bewildered himself in the mazes of his own labyrinth of fancies. At length the decisive moment came, and, in a manner equally characteristic and unusual, Allston asked Mrs. Norwood to become his wife. He was scarcely prepared for her excessive agitation, and still less for her indefinite reply.

"It shall be for you to decide, Mr. Allston," said the gentle widow, as she struggled with her tears, "I will not pretend to have misunderstood your feelings towards me, nor will I attempt to conceal the fact that to your proffered affection I owe the first gleam of happiness which has visited my weary heart since the days of childhood. But I have deceived you, and I cannot accept your hand while you remain ignorant of the events of my early life. Some months since, I wrote what I cannot bring my lips to utter, and you will find in this manuscript all you ought to know. Judge not too hardly of my concealment—my only error has been silence on a subject with which the world had nought to do, and this I trust your heart will not visit with too severe a punishment."

Allston took the papers, and silent and dismayed hurried to the seclusion of his study. Dreading some evil, though he knew not what shape it might assume, he broke the seal and read as follows :

"Left an orphan at a very early age, my first recollections are those of school life. My parents, who were residents though not natives of the island of Jamaica, sent me to England for my education, and, dying soon after my departure, I became the ward of my mother's cousin, a gay and dissipated bachelor, whose house offered not a proper home to a young girl. I was the heiress to great wealth, but was, at the same time, a homeless and desolate child, who might well have envied the privileges of domestic affection which are enjoyed by the offspring of poverty. My wealth procured me respect and consideration among my teachers and a few interested school-fellows, while it purchased for me exemption from much of the discipline of the school, as well as from many of the studies which I wished to avoid. I was, therefore, little likely to profit by the advantages of my position in life, while its disadvantages were in my case greatly multiplied. I was a wayward, wilful, warm-hearted child, full of impulsive affections, but irritable in temper, and, though perfectly docile to the law of kindness, utterly beyond the subjugation of severity. Frank and confiding in my disposition, I was easily led to place

confidence in those who treated me with a semblance of affection, and the sense of loneliness which oppressed my heart, even in childhood, led me rather to seek for the friendship of those by whom I was surrounded, while the romance, which shows itself in a greater or less degree in the developing character of every school girl, assumed in me the form of a morbid desire to inspire affection in those whom Providence had placed around me, to fill the places of parents, and brothers and sisters to my desolate life.

"I was in my fifteenth year, full of exaggerated sensibility, and just beginning to model my dreams of future happiness after the standard afforded by my favorite novels, when a circumstance, apparently of trivial moment, occurred to shadow my whole life with sorrow. The only accomplishment in which I made any decided progress was that of drawing, and in this I had early exhibited both taste and skill. Our drawing-master, an old and wily Italian, requested permission to introduce his nephew, who could materially aid him in instructing us to sketch from nature; and, as it involved our schoolmistress in no additional expense, she readily assented. Our new teacher was accordingly introduced to us under the name of Signior Baldini, but it needed scarcely one look to make us doubt his relationship to the old man, for his florid complexion, blond hair, and blue eyes bore little resemblance to the dark countenance and classical features of the fine Italian face. Those of us who were novel readers immediately fancied that we could detect beneath this humble disguise some noble heir or enamored youth who sought to obtain access to a lady-love immured within the walls of our school. Our young and glowing hearts, full of passions which had been prematurely developed by the mischievous tenor of our stolen reading, and ready to welcome any thing which might give occupation to their restlessness, were quickly excited in favor of the new comer. Our sketching from nature required us to take many walks in the vicinity, and, though we were never unaccompanied by one of the female teachers, yet a thousand opportunities for forming an imprudent intimacy occurred during these excursions. I soon found, however, that the attentions of Signior Baldini were especially directed to me, and the vanity of my sex, as well as my own excited fancy, led me to encourage rather than repulse his proffered advances. I cannot recall all the details of the vile conspiracy to which I fell a victim. Imagine a child of fifteen summers subjected to the arts of a man more than twice her age—a man who had studied human nature in its worst forms, and therefore well knew how to take advantage of its slightest tendency to error—a man whose talents enabled him to conceal the heart of a demon beneath the features of a demigod. Imagine the effect of these arts upon a sensitive and romantic girl, a lonely and orphaned creature who was yearning for the voice of affection, and weaving many a beautiful fancy of future happiness, to be found only in reciprocal affection, and you will anticipate the result.

"A well invented story of high birth, unmerited misfortunes, and a long cherished passion for me, awakened my sympathy, and I soon imagined that nothing could repay my lover's tenderness but the bestowal of my hand and fortune. I fancied myself deeply and devotedly attached to one who had submitted to the degradation of disguise for my sake, and, on the day when I attained my sixteenth year, I eloped with my lover, who now dropped his assumed title and adopted his true name of Wallingford. As my guardian was at that time in Paris, we met with no molestation, and were privately married in London, where we had decided to take up our abode. I afterwards learned that those of my teachers who had been parties to the plot were well paid for their services, while the only real sufferer was the principal of the establishment, who had been kept in total ignorance of the scheme, and whose dignified sense of propriety was shocked at having such a stigma affixed to her school. When my guardian returned he read me a lecture on my imprudence, and tried to satisfy his conscience for past neglect, by refusing to allow me more than a mere maintenance until I should attain my majority. To this, however, I refused submission, and the matter was finally compromised in a manner quite satisfactory to both parties. Mr. Wallingford immediately engaged elegant lodgings, and we commenced living in a style better suited to my future fortune than to my actual income.

"My heart sickens when I look back to the weary years which succeeded my imprudent marriage. As time matured my judgment I was pained by the discovery of many weaknesses and faults in my husband, to which I would willingly have remained blind. Yet the discovery of these did not impair the simple, child-like affection with which I regarded the only being on earth to whom I was bound by any ties. I clung to him as the only one in the wide world whom I was permitted to love, and it required but little effort on his part to have strengthened my girlish fondness into the lasting fervor of womanly tenderness. While yet I remained in my minority Mr. Wallingford treated me with some show of consideration. Fitful gleams of kindness, transient visitings of former fondness, glimpses of the better nature which had been so perverted by evil habits, and endearments still bestowed in moments of persuasion, linked my heart to the ideal which I had enshrined in his image. But no sooner was I put in possession of my fortune than he threw off the mask entirely. I was too much in his power to render any further concealment necessary, and he now appeared before me in all the true deformity of his character. Dissipated in his habits, coarse in his feelings, low in his pursuits and pleasures, he had only sought me for the wealth which could minister to his depravity.

"I will not pain you by a detail of the petty tyranny to which I was now subjected. My impetuous temper was at first aroused, but, alas! it was soon subdued by frightful severity. Indifference, neglect, intemperance, infidelity, nay, even personal ill treatment, which left the discolored badge of

slavery upon my flesh for days and weeks, were now my only portion. Broken in health and in spirit, I prayed for death to release me from my sufferings, and I verily believe my husband sought to aid my wishes by his cruel conduct. But the crushed worm was at length compelled to turn upon the foot which trampled it. I was driven from my home—a home which my wealth had furnished with all the appliances of taste and elegance—and placed in a farmhouse at some distance from London, while a vile woman, whose name was but another word for pollution, ruled over my house. To increase the horrors of my situation, I learned that Wallingford was taking measures to prove me insane, and thus rid himself of my presence while he secured the guardianship of my person and property. This last injury aroused all the latent strength of my nature. Hitherto I had been like a child brought up in servitude and crouching beneath the master's blow, but I was now suddenly transformed into the indignant and energetic woman.

"Alone and unaided I determined to appeal to the laws of the land for redress, and prudence directed me to men as wise as they were virtuous, who readily undertook my cause. Wallingford was startled at my sudden rebellion, but he was never unprepared for deeds of evil. My servants were suborned, papers were forged, falsehoods were blazoned abroad, all the idle gossip which had floated for its passing moment on the breath of scandal like the winged seed of some noxious plant on the summer breeze, was carefully treasured, and every thing that power could effect was tried to make me appear degraded in character and imbecile in mind. The circumstances attending my marriage—my first fatal error, committed at the suggestion and under the influence of him who now adduced it as proof of my weakness—was one of the evidences of my unworthiness, while the utterings of a goaded spirit and the wild anguish of a breaking heart were repeated as the language of insanity. But for once justice and equity triumphed over the quibbles of the law. The decree of the highest court in the realm released me from my heavy bondage. A conditional divorce which allowed me full power to marry again, but restrained my husband from such a privilege, in consequence of his well-attested cruelty and ill treatment, was the result of our protracted and painful lawsuit. My fortune, sadly wasted and diminished, was placed in the hands of trustees for my sole benefit, and I immediately settled upon Wallingford a sum sufficient to place him far above want, upon the sole condition that he never intruded himself into my presence.

"After these arrangements were completed I determined to put the ocean between me and my persecutor. On my twenty-sixth birthday—just ten years from the day which saw me a bride—I landed in America. Alas! how changed were all my prospects, how altered all my feelings! I was still in the prime of life, but hope and joy and all the sweet influences of affection were lost to me forever, and after wandering from place to place I finally took up my abode in Elmsdale, rather from a sense of utter

weariness than from any anticipation of peace. I little knew that Providence had prepared for me so sweet a rest after all my sufferings. I little knew that peace and hope, aye, and even happiness, were yet in store for me. Resigning a name to which I had no longer any claim, I resumed my family name of Norwood, and sought to appear in society as the widowed rather than as the divorced wife. I have thus avoided painful remarks and impertinent questionings, while I was enabled to secure for myself a quiet retreat from the turmoil of the world. Perhaps to you, Charles Allston, I ought to have been more frank, but surely you cannot blame me for shrinking from the disclosure of such bitter and degrading memories. You have now learned all my early history—you have seen my error and you have traced its punishment—let me now unfold the page which can reveal the present.

"A fancy, light as the gossamer which the wind drives on its wing, first led to my marriage. I was a child in heart and mind and person, when I became the victim of arts which might have misled a wiser head and a less susceptible heart. Left to myself I should probably have forgotten my first love fancy even as one of the thousand dreams which haunt the brain of youth. But if, after my marriage, I had experienced kindness and tenderness from my husband, the feeling would have deepened into earnest and life-long affection, instead of curdling into hatred and contempt within my bosom. The love of my girlhood was blighted even as a flower which blossoms out of time, and loneliness has hitherto been my lot through life. Will you deem me too bold, my friend, if I tell you that from you I have learned my first lesson in womanly duty? Till I knew you I dreamed not of the power of a fervent and true passion—till I beheld you I believed my heart was cold and dead to all such gentle impulses. You have taught me that happiness may yet be found even for me. In loving you I am but doing homage to virtue and wisdom and piety—in bowing down before your image I am but worshipping the noblest attributes of human nature enshrined within your heart. I dared not pour out the fullness of my joy until I had told you my sad tale, but now that you know all—now that no shadow of distrust can fall upon the sunshine of the future, come to me, and assure me with your own dear voice that my troubled dream is now forever past, and that the dawn of happiness is breaking upon my weary heart!"

To comprehend the full effect of this letter on Charles Allston, the peculiarity of his character—his strict ideas of duty—his devotion to his holy calling—his shrinking dread of any thing which could, by any possibility, tend to diminish his influence over the consciences of his flock—and his long cherished dread of self-indulgence—must ever be borne in mind. He had loved Eleanor Norwood with a fervor startling even to himself, and according to his usual distrustful habits of thought, he had feared lest the very intensity of his feelings was a proof of their sinfulness. Accustomed to consider every thing as wrong which was peculiarly gratifying to himself—

measuring by the amount of every enjoyment the extent of its wickedness—restraining the most innocent impulses because he conceived heaven could only be won by continual sacrifices—he had shrunk in fear and trembling at his own temerity when his overmastering passion led him to pour forth his feelings to the object of his love. He had retired to his apartment in a state of pitiable agitation, and while he awaited Mrs. Norwood's reply with hope, he yet half repented of his proffered suit, lest there should have been too much of the leaven of mere earthly tenderness in the bosom which had vowed to forsake all its idols. This letter therefore produced a terrible revulsion in his feelings. His rigid sense of duty, and his adherence to divine rather than human laws, compelled him to behold in Eleanor Norwood only the wife of another. Vile and unworthy as Wallingford might be, he was to Allston's view still the husband, and though the tie might be loosened by the hand of man it could only be entirely severed by the will of God. All the sternness of that long practised asceticism, which had given Allston such a twofold character, was called forth by the thought of the sin he had so nearly committed. The wild enthusiasm of his nature led him to regard Mrs. Norwood as a temptress sent to try the strength of his self-denying piety. He remembered the tale of the hermit, who for forty years abode in the wilderness, sinless in thought and in deed, while he kept his eye ever fixed upon the cross; but the moment of wavering came—the holy eremite turned his gaze for one single instant from the symbol, and Satan, who had long watched in vain, obtained the mastery over *him* whose life-long piety had not availed against a moment's weakness. Allston shuddered as his busy fancy suggested the parallel between the monkish legend and his own present feelings. The thought of the disgrace which would attend him who, while reproving sin in others, could be accused of cherishing it in his own household—of the judgment which would fall upon him who should dare to minister to the people in holy things, while he bore the marks of a deadly leprosy within his own bosom—until at length the spiritual pride, which was in truth his besetting sin, subdued all lighter emotions.

That evening Mrs. Norwood sat in her quiet room, with the light of a shaded lamp falling upon the gentle beauty of a face now lighted up with hope, and which, but for the restless and hurried glance which was occasionally turned upon the quaintly fashioned clock, might have seemed the picture of placid happiness. A soft glow flushed her cheek, her eyes were full of radiance, and, as she raised her head in the attitude of a listener, a smile of almost childlike joyousness parted her flexible lips. A step resounded on the gravel walk without. Her first impulse led her to spring forward to welcome the expected visitor, but womanly pride checked her in mid career, and she yet stood in half uncertainty when the door opened to admit a servant who handed her a small parcel. Her cheek grew ashy pale as she broke the seal. A paper dropped from the envelop—it was her own letter to Allston; and she sank into a chair

as she unfolded the note which accompanied it. Written in Allston's hand, yet so blotted, and traced in such irregular characters, that the agitation of the writer might well be divined, were these words :

"I will not express the agony of mind with which I have perused the enclosed papers. I have been tried almost beyond my strength, but I have been mercifully spared the commission of a crime at which my soul shudders. I will not upbraid you, madam, for your cruel concealment ; your own conscience will be your accuser, and it will not fail to remind you that your deception has nearly hurled me from an eminence which it has been the labor of my life to reach. But you have been only an instrument in the hands of a higher power. I fancied myself superior to temptation, and God has sent you to teach me the necessity of closer watchfulness over my still frail nature. Eleanor Norwood, I have loved you as I never loved earthly creature before, but sooner would I suffer the keenest pangs of that chronic heartbreak, to which the martyrdom of the pile and fagot is but pastime, than take to my arms the wife of a living husband. You have made me wretched but you cannot make me criminal. Henceforth we meet no more on earth, for I have vowed to tear your image from my heart, though, even now, every fibre bleeds at the rude sundering of such close knit ties. Receive my forgiveness and my farewell."

When Mrs. Norwood's faithful old servant entered the room, about an hour after the receipt of this letter, she found her mistress lying senseless on the floor. Suspecting something like the truth, the woman prudently gathered up the papers from view, and then summoned assistance. Mrs. Norwood was carried to her apartment and medical aid was immediately procured. The physician pronounced her to be suffering from strong nervous excitement, and, after giving her a sleeping draught, prescribed perfect quiet for the next few days. But ere morning she was in a state of delirium, and fears were entertained for her intellect if not for her life. Several days passed in great uncertainty, but at length hope revived and Mrs. Norwood once more awoke to consciousness. Feeble as an infant, however, she required great care to raise her from the brink of the grave, and the springs of life, so sadly shattered by long continued sorrow, were now in danger of being broken by a single stroke. Disease seemed undetermined in its final attack, and at length assumed the form under which it most frequently assists the insidious labors of secret sorrow. A hectic cough now racked her feeble frame, and it was evident that consumption would soon claim another victim. Just at this time a letter, sealed with black, was forwarded to Mrs. Norwood's address, and after being withheld from her several weeks, by advice of her physician, was finally given to her because all hope of prolonging her life was at an end. The perusal of this letter seemed rather to soothe than to excite the sinking invalid. "It comes too late," was her only exclamation as she deposited it in a little cabinet which stood beside her bed, and from that moment she made no allusion to its contents.

It was remarked in the village that Mr. Allston had become excessively severe in his denunciations of error, while his habits had become more rigid and reserved than ever. His former persuasive eloquence had given place to violent and bitter revilings of sin, while those who applied to him for religious consolation were terrified rather than attracted by the threatenings of the fiery zealot. Once only did he seem moved by gentler feelings. An aged clergyman, who occasionally visited him from a distant town, was summoned to the bedside of Mrs. Norwood, and when he returned to Mr. Allston's study he feelingly described the bodily pangs and angelic patience of the gentle sufferer. The frame of the stern man shook as he listened, and tears—such tears as sear rather than relieve the heart—fell from his eyes. It was one of the last struggles of human feeling in the breast of one who vainly fancied himself marked out for a higher than human destiny—one more was yet to come, and then earth held no claim upon his heart.

It was not long delayed, for the time soon arrived when the bell tolled for her whose sorrowful life and early death had been the penalty of a single error. Allston stood beside the coffin and saw within its deep shadow the pale and stony features of the being whom he had loved ; and even while his heart smote him as the shortener of her brief and melancholy span of life, he yet nerved himself with the high, stern resolve of one who suffers in the cause of duty. With that cold brow beneath his gaze, he poured forth, from the depths of an agonized heart, a prayer whose solemn eloquence thrilled every listener like a voice from the grave. No sound escaped his lips as the clods of the valley fell rattling on the coffin-lid which shrouded the heart so sorely tried in life, but, in the deep midnight, groans and bitter cries, which rived his stern bosom, were heard issuing from the pastor's lonely closet.

Mrs. Norwood's old servant inherited the property in Elmsdale, and one of her first duties was to place in Mr. Allston's hands the cabinet which she said her mistress had requested might be given him after her death. It contained only Mrs. Norwood's letter and her lover's reply, together with a *third*, in an unknown hand, bearing a black seal. This last was dated *some months earlier* than the others, and contained the tidings of Mr. Wallingford's death. He had fallen a victim to his own misdeeds in Italy, and at the moment when Allston had considered himself the subject of a temptation intended to try his strength, the divorced wife was in reality free from every shadow of a tie.

Why had she not disclosed these tidings to her scrupulous lover ? Ask rather why she who had twice suffered from man's wayward nature, and who had escaped from the *vices* of one only to perish by the too rigid *virtues* of another, should place trust in any earthly affection ? Sick of life, hopeless of future peace, sinking under a fatal disease, she had taken a lesson from the inferior creation :

"mute  
The camel labors with the heaviest load,  
And the wolf dies in silence."

Original.

## ESTHER WILSON.

BY ROBERT HAMILTON.

It was in the early part of last summer, that, after an absence of several years, I paid a visit to the romantic village of N——, in the state of Massachusetts. The season was unusually beautiful, the first flush of summer having passed over the landscape. The boundless ocean, on whose verge stands the village, lay like a mighty sheet of silver glowing beneath the glorious sun—the air was alive with the music of birds, the shout of the husbandman was heard in the fields, the laugh of the happy urchins as they gambolled over the verdant plain, rang merrily on the ear. All nature appeared to have awakened from a long and heavy slumber, forgetting its wintry dreams, and to smile in renewed strength and beauty in the presence of a Beneficent creator.

Close to the beach, and at a short distance from the village, are the ruins of one of the earliest places of worship, erected by some of the pilgrim fathers, and where the moss-grown and dilapidated grave-stones yet bear the names of some of these singular beings. It is now seldom used as a burial-place, save by a few of the inhabitants, descendants of the fathers, or as the last home of the wrecked mariner, or the stranger without a friend.

This little grave-yard was always a favorite resort of mine, and every day would I find myself wandering among the homes of its departed, or, for hours would I sit and watch the sun sinking in his glory, 'till the crescent moon and her train of stars, ascended the blue vault of heaven.

It was in one of these solitary rambles, that an incident befel me, which, although bearing on it the semblance of fiction, yet is none. I had seated myself upon a little hillock, and was listening to the solemn voice of the ocean as it broke in wreaths of foam upon the golden beach, when the sound of a footstep fell upon my ear, and looking round, I beheld the figure of a man approach, and kneel upon a new made grave. For some time he continued in that position, and when he arose, the moon, which was shining brightly, revealed to me a face which, although greatly changed by the hand of grief, was yet by me remembered. The time, the place, and so singular a meeting after so long a separation, for a moment kept us silent, but on my speaking his name, the feelings of our boyhood came full upon us, and we welcomed each other with delight.

After mutual congratulations had been exchanged, I ventured to refer to the scene which I had just witnessed. "Ah!" said he with a languid smile, "it is indeed a melancholy sight to behold me thus, but that grave conceals all that ever truly gave hope or happiness to my existence."

"And who is its inmate?" I inquired.

"Esther Wilson!" he answered in a voice trembling with emotion.

The name was familiar to me. Esther Wilson I had once known as the most beautiful girl of the village,

and I remembered that when I left it to mingle in the throng of cities, my friend, Henry Walworth, was considered as her betrothed. For years I had been absent, while new scenes and strange faces had almost obliterated from "the tablet of my memory" the village beauty. Remembering their betrothment, and beholding the present grief of Walworth, I concluded that he was now mourning for her recent loss. His narration, however, soon gave a different aspect to my supposition, and which I shall endeavor to relate as nearly in substance as he imparted it to me.

"Esther Wilson, it appeared, immediately after her betrothal to Walworth, was summoned to New-York to take possession of a handsome property bequeathed to her by a rich relation. Young, artless, and beautiful, she soon became the magnet of attraction. To a village girl, unacquainted with fashionable society, the pleasing addresses of the gay, and the many amusements which abound in a metropolis, burst upon her like the enchanted gardens of Aladdin, and her native cottage, with its snowy walls, embowered among roses and honeysuckles, were remembered by her with a feeling akin to disgust, when contrasted with the costly apartments of which she was now mistress. Her old friends and playmates were recollected but as the shadows of a dream, and even Walworth she determined to forget for a man of fashion. Poor Henry, whose whole existence was wrapped up in her, began to surmise the worst: letter after letter he had addressed to her, but to none of them had she deigned to return an answer. At length, unable longer to endure the agony of suspense, he resolved to behold Esther, and win from her own lips her true determination.

It was a summer's day when he entered New-York; every face and object appeared to wear a strange and repulsive cast. Having secured apartments at a hotel, he retired to rest from the fatigue of his journey, and devise the most prudent means of beholding Ellen. He seated himself at the window, which commanded a full view of Broadway. The street was alive with every class of humanity, from the ragged and wretched beggar, up to the man of wealth and fashion. Walworth could not help contrasting the busy and exciting scene with his own quiet and happy village, and wondering how Esther could exchange it for the American Babylon. Every passer by seemed languid and sickly. The heat was intense, and not a semblance of shade presented itself. Here and there a stunted tree reared its trunk in the street, whose leaves hung scorched and dusty in the bright blaze of a July sun, lacking the rich and verdant beauty which marks the native denizens of the woods and plains. Although the scene was novel to Walworth, he could not but regard it with disgust, and his heart leaped back to the sweet sounds of the purling brooks—the green and flower-enamelled sward—the cool, dark, and silent recesses of the forest—where nature reigned in all its purity—where he had sported in the joyousness of boyhood, and every object was familiar to him as a household god. He thought, too, of Esther—his own blue-eyed and blushing maiden, and he trembled as he thought that perhaps she had for-

gotten the home of her childhood—the playmates of her youth—perhaps forgotten him.

As he sat thus ruminating, a splendid barouche was seen advancing; in it, were a lady and gentleman. By some secret sympathy, Walworth's eyes became riveted upon the same; nearer and nearer it approached; his heart beat quick and heavily—his respiration almost ceased, a flitting film passed over his eyes—and he grasped the sill of the window with a desperate and despairing strength—he could not be mistaken—it was *her*—Esther Wilson—his own betrothed, in close and playful dalliance with a fashionable stranger—she passed beneath his eye—he essayed to rise, with the resolution of following them, but strength failed him, and he fell helpless and almost fainting back into his chair.

When he recovered from his bewilderment, a wild and unnatural energy took possession of his heart; he felt that all he loved was lost to him for ever, yet he determined once again to behold her—to confront her face to face, and remind her of her promise, and accordingly, that evening, he repaired to her dwelling. It was situated in one of the most fashionable streets of the city, and as he stood before it, the remembrance of former scenes came fresh upon him. Could it be that fortune could so soon have changed her—that the once simple and beautiful Esther, the pride of the village, was now one of the leading belles of the fashionable world—that her heart was now probably another's? and he stood hesitating whether or not to enter the magnificent mansion, or to retrace his steps at once, back to his native home, and seek in its placid bosom a balm to his stricken spirit. While he stood thus irresolute, the sound of music, and the tones of a voice but too familiar, fell clearly on his ear. His resolution was taken, and ascending the steps, with a trembling hand he rung the bell. A servant, neat as a popinjay, appeared, and demanded his business. "It is with your mistress, sir," said Henry; "say that a gentleman desires to speak with her."

The servant was confounded at his peremptory tone.

"You understand me, sir!" said Henry.

"Certainly!" replied the man of waiting. "If you have a card, I shall be happy to convey it to Miss Wilson."

"Say, sir, that Mr. Walworth waits the convenience of Miss Wilson for an interview."

The lacquy bowed, and ushering Walworth into an apartment, departed on his mission.

Miss Wilson was seated at the piano as the servant entered—a perfumed and tastefully dressed exquisite was hanging over her, who, to prevent the songstress from being interrupted, placed his finger on his lip, betokening silence; the docile creature at once comprehended his meaning, and stood mute and motionless. When Miss Wilson had finished, "Now, James, your business," said the man of fashion, who appeared to assume an authority in the mansion.

"Mr. Walworth desires to see you, Madam."

Ellen sprang to her feet, the blood forsook her cheek, and with difficulty she articulated *who?*

"Mr. Walworth," repeated the servant.

But for the assistance of the man of fashion, she would have fallen to the floor. In an instant, however, she recovered her fortitude, and courtesying to Mr. Brilliant, "You must think me a silly creature," said she, "but this is an old and once esteemed acquaintance, and the suddenness of his visit has so confounded me, that my nerves—the weather—the—"

Mr. Brilliant gently led her to the sofa, and tendering her an exquisitely chased smelling-bottle, the delicate sensibilities of our new-made lady were soon restored to their wonted calmness, although a strange feeling yet lingered about her heart at the recollection of her old lover being so near, and the neglect with which she had of late treated him.

"Will you admit him to your presence, my dear Miss Wilson?" said Mr. Brilliant, "or shall he call again?"

"Yes—no—that is—" and with a strong effort she desired the attendant to tell Mr. Walworth to walk up.

When Walworth entered the magnificent apartment, its brilliancy, for a moment, bewildered him, and he paused at its threshold, unconscious how to deport himself. It was a high and spacious room, almost lined throughout with mirrors, in which every object was ten times multiplied. The hangings were of the most delicate fawn color, and inlaid with the most ingenious devices. The furniture was of the most costly workmanship. A table of the purest marble stood in the centre, on which lay innumerable gems of art, while in various corners, vases filled with the freshest flowers, wafted their fragrance upon the evening breeze, as it blandly swept through the apartment: the whole presenting a strange contrast to the simple and quiet home of Esther's girlhood. In a deep recess the lady of the mansion was seated, attended by the exquisite Brilliant, and it was only as she affectedly exclaimed, "Ah! Mr. Walworth, how are you," that Henry recognized her presence.

"Esther!" he faintly said, and extending his hand, crossed towards her, but instead of receiving him with all the warmth and joy of their former acquaintance, she only lazily presented him with the little finger of her left hand.

Henry was struck speechless; he could scarcely credit the evidence of his senses, so great was the change in her appearance and manner, and he stood gazing upon her with a look of vacancy.

"Will you be seated, sir?" said Brilliant, pointing to a chair with the greatest *nonchalance* of voice and action.

"No, sir!" responded Henry, his faculties returning to him, and his heart bursting with indignation at the callous behavior of Esther. "I wish, sir, to speak with this lady *alone*! if your presence can be conveniently dispensed with—"

"My presence—speak with this lady—alone—Miss Wilson—singular conduct—rather rude. Harken, sir—"

"And harken you, sir. I do not know you, *not* from your appearance do I desire the pleasure, but my claims to the lady's presence are a thousand times *more*



strong than yours, and I request, nay, *demand*, that for a brief space, you quit this apartment."

"Sir—Miss Wilson—by all that is good—I shall not suffer—you must explain."

"Cense your jargon, sir; when I have finished my interview with Miss Wilson, I shall be then happy to afford you all the explanation you may desire."

"Mr. Brilliant, for my sake, quit the room," interposed Esther. "This young man presumes upon a silly acquaintance contracted in the days of our youth. I shall soon convince him of his error."

"As you desire it, my dear Miss Wilson—certainly—your wishes are a law, but this rustic cavalier and I must have a few words together," and the creature of fashion leisurely waddled out of the room.

A dead pause ensued his departure for some moments. At length Walworth broke the silence:—

"You have not forgotten me, *madam*, I perceive, although you have forgotten the terms on which we were accustomed to meet." Esther spoke not, but would have given worlds, had she possessed them, to have escaped his presence. He continued—"When last we met, Esther—Miss Wilson, I should have said, we bound ourselves by a solemn oath, in the presence of our God, that we should become man and wife—that vow you seem to have forgotten—to have yielded your heart up to the allurements and follies of the gay world. Yet I will not reproach you; if you are willing to renounce the home of your youth, and the man of your betrothment, be it so. For my own part, I release you from your vow, though God, I am certain, never will—that oath you never can forget, sworn, as it was, under the blue canopy of heaven, with the bright stars looking down as angel witnesses, and the summer wind wafting our words to the throne of God. Esther Wilson, I forgive you, but as sure as there is a hereafter, the anger of that God will overtake you." He rushed from the apartment, and Esther, confounded and terror-stricken, remained for some moments in a cold and death-like stupor.

We shall here introduce a vacuum in our narrative—briefly recording that Esther became the wife of Mr. Brilliant, who, having dissipated her fortune, after two years, sunk into the grave a miserable *debauchee*. In the meantime, the parents of Esther also died, and she was thus left a young and giddy widow, without the means to gratify her extravagant propensities. By degrees she slowly dwindled into the most ordinary circumstances. Those who had been the fond companions of her wealthy days, now shrank from her presence—her applications for assistance were disregarded by them all, and the sneer of the proud and the heartless met her at every turn. Ah! how gladly would she have returned to her native village—but these was none to extend to her the hand of welcome. How did she lament her folly in casting away the generous heart of Walworth. Too truly had his parting words been verified, "The anger of God had overtaken her." Walworth, from the moment of his separation from Esther, became an altered man. Misanthropy was stamped upon his visage—society he shunned—with his book alone, did he hold converse,

or quitting his couch at midnight, would ramble along the beach—solitary and sad.

Two years after this, in the fall of 1840, he was sojourning in the western part of the state of New York, with a kind family, to whom he was distantly related. They had heard of his melancholy, and kindly persuaded him to visit them, in the hope that a change of scene and associations would restore him to his former state of mind and body. No amusement or comfort was neglected by them that could contribute to his happiness. Among the families to whom he was introduced, was one by the name of Worthington, a name which he had often heard Esther mention, in their days of blessedness, but which now made no particular impression upon his mind, more than serving to call up anew her memory. One evening, he had been invited to a party at their hospitable mansion, and in the course of conversation, he chanced to mention the name of his native village. Mrs. Worthington, one of the most eloquent of the party, all at once became silent, while his kind friend took the first opportunity to change the tenor of the discourse, and withdraw him from the apartment. "My dear Walworth," said he, "perhaps you are not aware that the same cause which has so ruined your peace, has to a great degree, wounded that of this worthy family."

"How mean you?" he asked, astonished at the intelligence. "Esther Wilson is distantly related to them," answered his friend, "and is at this moment, subsisting on their bounty, and I know that any one, possessing a knowledge of her present situation, would be to them the cause of much unhappiness."

"Good heavens! can it be?" exclaimed Henry, "the young and beautiful Esther Wilson reduced to poverty? How—when—where did this occur?"

"But recently."

"And where is she?—injured, as I have been by her, I can yet forgive—pity—and relieve her?"

"Not so, my dear Walworth, her poverty is no crime in the eyes of the Worthingtons—but—come, let us return to the parlor."

Walworth saw by his look, that some great *moral* error had been committed by Esther, and for a moment felt paralyzed—when, suddenly recovering his presence of mind, "But what," he exclaimed, grasping his arm with the energy of desperation, "for Heaven's sake tell me the truth—keep me not in suspense—better death than to live in the agony of doubt."

"Nay, my good Walworth—force me not to an avowal—suspect the *worst*, you will not be mistaken."

In one moment, he appeared to live his life over again—"his boyhood's home,"—father, mother, and above all, Esther Wilson stood before him. The scenes of his childhood—the pretty rose-lipped, blue-eyed girl, wandering with him, hand in hand, among the woods and valleys—that young girl bursting into maidenhood—and the virgin coyness first betraying itself—then that deep and holy attachment, akin to the beatitude of heaven—that night, too, when he received her virtuous betrothment—then her withering behavior to him in the pride of her plenitude and fortune—all, all, came before him with the vividness of lightning—and now he



saw her a blighted, withered flower—a creature dependent upon the charitable pittance of another—an outcast from society—a thing to be pointed at by the finger of scorn—a wanton! Oh, God, how heavy had been her punishment. But to the sequel of his story—that night, on his return home, he found that to sleep was impossible. Conjecture was busy with him—a thousand resolutions were formed, and as quickly broken. First, he thought to seek her out—forgive her, and offer her his hand; but, then did the scorn of the world rise before him—its serpent hiss sounded in his ear, and his heart failed him. Then did he resolve to carry her back to her native village, and to afford her a shelter; but he knew that the busy voice of slander would follow her there. What, then, was to be done? but this—To protect her as far as the rules of propriety would permit,—and with his little means to aid her future days, and assuage her sorrows.

With the dawn, he stood beside the couch of his relative. He imparted to him his resolution and implored him to afford him a clue to her residence. This he would not do. The only information he received respecting her, was, that she resided in the neighborhood, under the close inspection of the Worthington family.

For days did he devise all means and methods to discover her, but in vain. Yet he felt a consolation to know that he was near her—that, perhaps in his wanderings he passed the very home that contained his once loved treasure: and thus from day to day did he while away his weary hours, 'till the golden Autumn had given place to Winter, and a check was put upon his wanderings.

The winter had far advanced, and, as is usual in most towns and cities, a round of parties was kept up among the inhabitants who were friendly to one another. One evening, along with his kind relation, (although repugnant to his feelings,) he consented to be present at one of these. The apartments were decorated in the most costly style—the music was of the most voluptuous quality, beauty and fashion were mingled together, while “soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again, and all went merry as a marriage bell.” The hours sped nighly on, and the dance was at its height. The bell of a neighboring church told that the hour of midnight had arrived. But, what to them was the flight of time? light hearts and loving ones, were bound in the rosy garlands of pleasure,—so old “scythe and hour-glass” might keep journeying on, he could not mar their festivity.

The music ceased, and the dancers were retiring to their places, when a young female, fancifully attired, stood in the midst of them; her attenuated figure was trembling with the biting blast, through which, by the dampness of her clothing, it was evident she must have passed. Her pale and emaciated features wore the hue of death; her eyes, which were sunken in her head, yet flickered with a bright and unnatural lustre. Death-like silence pervaded the assembly—all eyes were fastened upon her; but to none was she apparently known. She looked around her with a wild and vacant stare, and in a low, sweet and melancholy voice, sighed “Where is he?—I know he is here.” Walworth

gasped for breath. It was Esther Wilson! That pale and trembling figure was the once beautiful creature,—the idol of his affection. “Esther, dear Esther!” he exclaimed. A shrill shriek burst from the delirious creature, and the next moment she lay senseless upon the floor.

The company gathered around her, while Henry rushed towards her and raising her from the ground, clasped her closely to his bosom. He could recollect no more 'till the next morning, when he awoke to sensibility in his own apartment, with his kind friends gathered around him. “Where is Esther?” was his first exclamation. They looked at each other in inexplicable silence. He repeated the question. Still were they silent. He asked again. His friend spoke not, but pointed to heaven. Walworth divined, alas! but too truly, that Esther was no more.

A kind of supernatural strength, now took possession of him. He seemed at once to have recovered all his energies, and in a cool and deliberate manner, gave directions that the corpse should be conveyed to N—, the place of her birth. Alone, he followed, and with a few friends, saw the last rites bestowed upon it. In that grave, where I beheld him kneeling, she sweetly slumbered, where nightly he came to breathe his orisons to God, that, although she had wronged him in life—in death they might be united.

The autumn following, I visited N—. The first inhabitant I inquired for, was Walworth. “He is dead, sir,” was the answer I received.

“And buried, I trust, with——”

“Esther Wilson, sir,” said my informant, anticipating my words. “It was his last request, and faithfully was it obeyed.” That very night I visited the grave-yard. The moon was casting its holy radiance on all around. A new grave-stone caught my gaze. I approached it and found it to contain this inscription:

Here lie the Bodies of  
Esther Wilson,  
and  
Henry Walworth.

## EVENING BEFORE WEDDING.

"I will tell you," continued the aunt to Louisa, "one thing which I have fully proved. It will go far toward preventing the possibility of any discord after marriage."

"Tell me!" said Louisa, anxiously.

"It is this:—demand of your bridegroom, as soon as the marriage is over, a solemn vow, and promise also yourself, never, even in jest, to dispute, or express any disagreement. I tell you never! for what begins in mere bantering, will lead to serious earnest. Avoid expressing any irritation at one another's words. Mutual forbearance is the great secret of domestic happiness. If you have erred, confess it freely, even if confession cost you some tears. Further, promise faithfully and solemnly, never upon any pretext or excuse, to have any secrets or concealments from one another: but to keep you private affairs from father, mother, brother, sister, relations, and the world. Let them be known only to each other and your God. Remember that any third person admitted to your confidence, becomes a party to stand between you. They will naturally side with one or the other. Promise to avoid this and renew the vow upon every temptation. It will preserve that perfect confidence, that union, which will indeed make you as one. Oh, if the newly married would but practice this spring of connubial peace, how many unions would be happy, which are now miserable.

## A KISS FOR A BLOW.

A visitor once went into a school at Boston, where he saw a boy and a girl on one seat, who were brother and sister. In a moment of thoughtless passion, the little boy struck his sister. The little girl was provoked, and raised her hand to return the blow. Her face showed that rage was working within, and her clenched fist was aimed at her brother, when her teacher caught her eye.

"Stop, my dear," said she, "you had much better kiss your brother than to strike him."

The look and the word reached her heart. Her hand dropped. She threw her arms round his neck, and kissed him. The boy was moved. He could have stood against the blow, but he could not withstand a sister's kiss. He compared the provocation he had given her with the return she had made, and the tears rolled down his cheeks. This affected the sister, and with her little handkerchief she wiped away his tears. But the sight of her kindness only made him cry the faster; he was completely subdued.

Her teacher then told the children always to return a kiss for a blow, and they would never get any more blows. If men and women, families and communities and nations would act on this principle, this world would almost cease to be a vale of tears.—*Youths' Cab.*

## EVENINGS AT A FRIEND'S—NO. 4.

BY MRS. S. E. FARLEY.

"ONE would think this time-worn book a fair match for your chair, Mr. Darley. I see it is not a great many years younger, bearing a date of 1610."

"It is a fine collection of poems on various subjects, the principal one being a remarkable paraphrase of the book of Job. But it contains one autograph which gives it more value, in my eyes, than belongs to any other book in the land—that of Algernon Sidney. One of the poems is addressed to Sir Robert Sidney, and is an elegy on his son William. The book must have been printed nearly half a century when Algernon owned it. Here is the name. Look at those clear bold characters. I can almost hear his reply to the executioner as, when Sidney laid his head upon the block, that officer inquired, 'Shall you rise again?' 'Not till the resurrection: strike on!'"

"Oh, noble Sidney! a glorious resurrection will it be to him. Think you, my friend, we shall have the happiness of knowing Sidney and all the noble band of patriots and martyrs who were once on earth—shall we meet and know them in that better land?"

"I have not a doubt of it. This old book has other claims to distinction. These quatrains are excellent: the other poems are written with much spirit, but my chief favourite is Job Triumphant; it is so close a paraphrase—does so perfectly embody the spirit of the original. Permit me to read you a few lines.—

Then drad Jehovah from a whirlwind spake  
In sacred terms, and thus with Job hee brake:  
Where? who is he, that (to himselfe so holy)  
Darkens my counsails, with contentious Folly?  
Come gird thy loynes, prepare thee, play the Man;  
I will oppose thee, answer, if thou can.  
Why! where wert Thou, tell (if thou know'st, dismay'd)  
When the Foundations of the earth I layd?  
Who marked first the Measure of it out?  
Or (can'st Thou tell) Who stretcht the Line about?  
What Bases had it, and fixt whereupon?  
Or, Who, thereof layd the first Corner-stone,  
When Morning-Stars for Joy together sang,  
And all God's Children cheerful echo rang?

You will remember the original (as we have it) stands thus: 'Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee; answer thou me.

'Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measure thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

'Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner-stone thereof, when the morning-stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"

"It is equally close and forcible throughout. Here is a small portion of that chapter on the Leviathan.—

I will not hide his Parts and Properties;  
Neither his Strength, nor seemly Symmetries.  
Who shall unhood him? who will double Rain,  
Shall bridle him with Snaffle, Trench, or Chain?  
Or put the Bit between his Jawes (his Portall),  
Impaled with Terror of his Teeth so mortal!  
His Shield-like Scales, he chiefly glories in,  
So close compact, glew'd, sealed, that, between,  
No Aire can enter, nor no Engin pierce,  
Nor any Poynt disloyne them or disperse.  
His Sneesings cause a Light, as brightly burning;  
His eyes are like the Eyelids of the Morning.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Darts daunt him not, more than they stubble were;  
He laugheth at the shaking of a Speare:

\* \* \* \* \*  
In earth is nothing like Him to be seen;  
So Fearlesse made, so full of hautie Spleen;  
Despising all High things, Himselfe beside;  
He is the King of all the Sons of Pride.

"It is admirable indeed! Let me read these lessons on mortality. I like the manner these old writers manage a grave or religious subject, but have met with none who pleased me when treating of lighter themes; particularly that of *love*. They never speak of it in terms sufficiently elevated and refined. Even your favourite Shakspeare, with all his knowledge of the human heart, could not fathom the depths of affection. Indeed I think they understand the passion of Love much better in modern days."

"We may know how to *talk* of it better, as there is undoubtedly an improvement in language and manners since the sixteenth century; but true love, lady, is the same in all ages, and there have been many hearts which, although cold for centuries past, 'aye cold as death can make them,' once beat with an attachment as pure, deep and heightened, as his who now sits by your side. I perceive I must controvert your position by some authority more convincing than my own opinion, and you will not listen to friend Shakspeare on this subject. Here, then, is a play of Jonson, written two hundred and twenty years since, and although the plot is miserable, it contains some passages of great beauty. Lovel is asked for a definition of *love* by a lady, and 'does so reply to her question as that she who had derided the name of love before, hearing his discourse, is now so

taken both with the man and his matter, that she  
confesseth herself enamoured of him.'

—— For what else

Is love, but the most noble pure affection  
Of what is truly beautiful and fair.  
Love is the spiritual coupling of two souls,  
So much more excellent as it *least* relates  
Unto the body—circular, eternal,  
Not feign'd or made, but born—and then so precious,  
As naught can value it but itself—so free,  
As nothing can command it but itself—  
And in itself so round and liberal,  
As where it favours, it bestows itself.  
True love hath no unworthy thought, no light,  
Loose, unbecoming appetite or strain,  
But is fix'd, constant, pure, immutable.  
Although I grant  
We like what's fair and graceful in an object;  
And true, would use it, in the all we tend to,  
Both of our civil and domestic deeds—  
In ordering of an army, in our style,  
Apparel, gesture, building or what not—  
All arts, and actions do affect their beauty.  
But put the case—in travel I may meet  
Some gorgeous structure, a brave frontispiece,  
Shall I stay captive in the outer court,  
Surprised with that, and not advance to know  
Who dwells there and inhabiteth the house?

Nay, nay, my friendship must be made within,  
With what can love me again—not with the walls,  
Doors, windows, architraves, frieze and cornice.  
My end is lost in loving of a face—  
An eye, lip, nose, hand, foot or other part,  
Whose all is *but a statue*, if the mind  
Move not, which only can make the return.  
The end of love is to have two made one  
In *will and in affection*; that the minds  
Be first inoculated, not the bodies.  
The body's love is frail, subject to change,  
And alters still with it—the mind's is firm,  
One and the same, proceeding first from weighing  
And well examining what is fair and good—  
Then what is like in reason, fit in manners—  
That breeds good-will—good-will desire of union.  
So knowledge first begets benevolence,  
Benevolence breeds friendship, friendship love—  
But where it starts or steps aside from this,  
It is a mere degenerate appetite—  
A lost, oblique, depraved affection,  
And bears no mark or character of love.

"What say you, ladies, does this 'breathe the  
true divinity of love?'"

"It is, I believe, the spirit and truth of that passion,  
but would be far more attractive if its *garments*  
were more modern. Good night."

# FANNY LINCOLN; OR, THE VILLAGE AMANUENSIS.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"INDEED Frank, it is time to end this nonsense. Ever since you have taken that foolish crotchet into your head, the house has been overrun. I wonder that you can find nothing better to do than writing letters for love-stricken clodhoppers, or silly house-maids."

"Quite a flourish of trumpets, sister mine," Frank Beverly replied, laughing.

"No, but Frank, I am in earnest. The fact is, people are beginning to talk about you!"

"And what do they say?"

"Why, they say—they say—"

"What do they say, Isabella?"

"Why, they say you must have but little to do!"

"The allegation I confess to be true, sister," Frank said, assuming a mock serious countenance. "But who, pray, are so much interested in me? Really, I ought to feel flattered."

"It is nothing to jest about, Frank. Everybody is beginning to wonder at you. Florence Milton told me this morning that you were the talk of the whole village."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, she did. And she says that many strange things are said about you."

"Did you ask her what those strange things were, Isabella?"

"Yes, but she hesitated, and then declined telling me. You don't know how it worries me, brother. I do wish you would act a little more sensibly, and visit oftener in the respectable families of the village. You are inquired after where-

ever I go. Indeed, there is not a family within twenty miles round, with which you might not form a connection, if you would. I know half a dozen young ladies, handsome, rich, accomplished, the pick of the county, who would jump at the offer of your hand."

"I am perfectly aware of that, sister."

"Then, Mr. Vanity, why are you not up and doing, instead of making yourself a subject of ridicule for the neighbourhood. Surely, you do not think so highly of yourself as to decline the first connection for wealth and beauty in Greenlawn village."

"And why not?"

"Frank!"

"Isabella!"

"Really, brother, I am afraid you are demented."

"As people say that I am."

"Do they say that, then?" the sister asked, while a cloud fell upon her face.

"O yes. But what of it? It does not make me crazy. Now, the fact is, sister, I have become so tired of the shallow-mindedness and insincerity of the elite of Greenlawn, that I have cut off the whole tribe; at least for a time. For the past two months, as you know, I have almost daily held confidential intercourse with the lower order of society in the village, as they are called; and in that time I have seen more integrity of purpose, more deep feeling, more tenderness of sentiment, than I have ever witnessed in my life. Truly, it

is refreshing to hear human nature speaking out in its own impressive language, full of energy and truth! It may be rough at times, for want of conventional polish, but it is honest, for it comes from the heart."

"Really, Frank, I do not know what to make of you."

"You do not think me crazy, at least?"

"I do not know what to think. A man of your position in society, it seems to me, acts very strangely, when he lets himself down and consorts with plebeianism."

"That is not a good word for an American lady to use, Isabella. This is not the country for patrician and plebeian distinctions. The *man* here is the noble. All else is but factitious, and not to be weighed against the man. In all classes, truth, integrity, and virtue, should make honour, and the want of these, dishonour. Come, sister, let the gold of your real character shine clear. Be true to yourself, to the spirit and impulse of this age and this country, to human nature!"

"How strangely you talk, Frank! But, hark! there is the bell again! Another of your elegant visitors, I suppose. Ah, me! I wish I could see the end of all this."

"Fanny Lincoln wishes to see Mr. Francis," said the old servant, opening the door of the room in which sat Frank Beverly and his sister.

"Tell Fanny to walk up into my study, and I will be there in a few moments."

The servant withdrew, and Frank said, as he rose from the sofa where he had been sitting by the side of his sister,

"Who is Fanny Lincoln I wonder?"

"Why she is the girl that old Mrs. Grand, the dairyman's wife, raised. I wonder what in the world she wants?"

"A letter written to her sweetheart, I suppose," Frank said, laughing. "I learn some strange things, sister, that you would like to know very much, for all your light estimation of the plebeians, as you call them. But, good morning; I must see what Fanny Lincoln wants."

When Frank Beverly entered the room he called his study, he found there an apparition that he had little expected. In the centre of the floor stood a fair girl, just blushing into gentle womanhood; and she glanced up at him with a modest, yet not bashful mien, as he entered, that had in it so much of innocence and truth, that the young man was instantly interested, and that not lightly, in his new visitor. He saw that her face was beautiful as to regularity of features and harmony of colour, but far more beautiful than any he had seen in its sweet expression, that blended so much of gentleness and truth of character, with maidenly grace and unassumed dignity.

"Fanny Lincoln, I believe?" Frank said, bowing with his best grace, and smiling at the same time, encouragingly.

"Yes, sir, that is my name," replied the maiden, while the colour deepened upon her cheek. "I

have made bold," she continued, "to come and ask of you to write a letter for me, if it will not be too much trouble. They tell me in the village that you will write for any one who asks you."

"Certainly I will, Fanny, and always with the greatest pleasure. But who do you wish me to write to for you? Some sweetheart of course!" he added, smiling.

"O no," replied Fanny, blushing. "I have no sweetheart; but I have a brother," and her manner changed, "from whom I was parted when but a child. We were orphans, and were separated early. He was carried away many hundred miles, and I have never seen him since. Of late I have thought of him much, and so constantly within a few days, that I have made bold to come and ask you to write to him a letter for me. I cannot write myself."

There was a mingling of sadness and regret in her tone as she uttered the closing sentence.

"Do you know where your brother is, Fanny?" Frank Beverly asked, looking on his visitor with a feeling of lively interest.

"I know the name of the place to which he was taken, and I suppose he is there still, if alive."

"What shall I say to him?"

"O you know best. I want to let him know that I am living, and that I still remember him and love him, and that I want him to write to me."

On this hint, Frank Beverly wrote the letter, in a neat and delicate hand, imitating as far as he could, that of a woman. After it was finished he read it to Fanny, and asked if that would answer.

"O yes," she said, "it is just as I thought myself. You are very kind and good, sir," and courtesying as she took the letter which he had folded and directed, she moved towards the door, still keeping her eyes upon the young man with a look of gratitude.

"You must let me see the answer when it comes, Fanny," Frank said.

"I will bring it to you as soon as I get it, if it should come at all," she replied, and dropping another courtesy, glided quickly from the room.

Two weeks passed without Frank Beverly again seeing Fanny; but every day he thought of her, and wondered if she would come again. He did not attempt to account for the interest he felt in the fair but humble stranger, contenting himself with feeling the interest, as he had a perfect right to do. He was sitting before his table engaged in writing one day, about the end of the period just named, when a gentle tap at his door was followed by the entrance of Fanny. She held in her hand a letter which she extended, while a glad smile lit up with new beauty her sweet expressive countenance.

"He is alive and well, and here is his answer," she said—"Read it."

Frank took the letter, and read it through with emotions of lively interest.

"Words are too inexpressive, my dear sister," it said, "to convey to you any idea of the delight

your letter gave me. In our separation, so young, all recollection of the place to which you were taken was lost by me. In vain have I sought to find you out. But now you suddenly reveal yourself, with every evidence that you are an elegant and accomplished woman. How this evidence gladdens my heart! You have not been left to neglect and ignorance, I know, although you say nothing of your exact condition. The style, the characters, the language of your letter, tell me all this.

"When shall we see each other? Will you come to me, or must I come to you? Circumstances which I cannot control will prevent the latter for many months. Say then that you will come to me, dear sister! How my heart yearns towards you!"

\* \* \* \* \*

After Frank Beverly had read the whole letter, which was a long one, and had handed it back to the maiden, who still stood near, he looked up into her face, and said,

"Do you wish an answer written to this?"

For a moment or two Fanny paused, thoughtfully, and then replied,

"I do. But ——" and she hesitated, and looked perplexed, even distressed.

"But what, Fanny?" asked Frank, kindly.

"My brother," replied the maiden, "has been deceived by the letter which you wrote for me, into the belief that I could write; he, therefore, imagines that I am different from what I really am. I must not continue this false idea of myself; and it troubles me to have to tell him the truth."

"But why need anything be said on the subject? I can write your letters for you, and he need know nothing of it."

The calm, thoughtful expression of Fanny's countenance instantly changed, and looking Frank steadily in the face with something like offended dignity in her manner, she answered,

"I never wilfully deceived any one, sir; much less would I deceive my brother."

"Admirable girl!" Frank mentally ejaculated, as he gazed upon her innocent face, now lit up with the impulse of truth roused in opposition to a false principle that had been presented as a rule of action. "How far superior art thou to the courtly dames who despise such truth of character as thine, as much as they despise thy humble birth and lowly condition."

There was now a pause of many moments, during which Fanny stood near to the young man, her eyes cast upon the floor. At length he said, looking up into her face,

"Fanny, a thought occurs to me, which may relieve you from your present embarrassment. Say nothing to your brother, now, of your deficiency, but learn to write, and when you can write well, then tell him the whole story frankly."

"There is no one to teach me, sir, and how can I learn?"

"Do you wish to learn?"

"O yes! I have long wished to learn."

"Are you willing to try?"

"Yes."

"Then, if you will accept my services, I will be your teacher."

Fanny looked at him with a bewildered air, not apprehending, on the instant, his whole meaning.

"Will you not let me teach you to write, Fanny?" he said, after the pause of a few moments.

"I wish to learn very much. But I cannot come here often, and besides, it would be giving you too much trouble."

"O, the trouble will be nothing. To me it will be only pleasant recreation; and besides, I shall have the delight springing from the performance of a good action."

"It would take me a long time to learn," urged the maiden, "and before my task was half accomplished my brother would probably be here, and then he would be sadly disappointed in me, and, I fear, cease to love me as much as he would were he to find me innocent in all my ignorance and deficiency."

"When the affection is in anything, we soon come to perform it well. Your eager desire to learn to write, will do more for you than you dream of. Come, let me give you your first lesson now."

Fanny hesitated a moment, and then, as directed, seated herself in Frank's chair at the table, while he stood, writing-master like, and commenced instructing his fair pupil. He found that she already knew how to make all the letters, rudely enough it is true. And as she could read well, manuscript as well as letter-press, there was nothing to do but to teach her to form the letters after correct models, and then to unite them skillfully. The first lesson occupied an hour, at the end of which time, even Fanny was surprised and delighted at her own improvement. Her heart was in it, and where that is the case there is little difficulty in learning to do anything.

"Well, what do you think of that?" asked her teacher, as he held up her last trial at writing a whole sentence.

"I can hardly believe it," she replied.

"You will learn fast enough, and in six weeks will be able to write your brother anything you please."

"Do you think so?" Fanny said, looking the young man earnestly in the face.

"Do I think so, Fanny? Yes, I know so!"

"I am afraid that it will be asking too much, and yet my brother's letter is not answered," the maiden said, in a hesitating tone.

"True, true, Fanny! Come here to-morrow at this time, and the letter will be ready for you, and then you can take another lesson in writing."

With a graceful inclination of the body, Fanny Lincoln withdrew, and left Frank Beverly in a somewhat mystified state of perception as to his own true internal thoughts and feelings.

"She is a sweet girl," he said musingly; "and would grace, with a little education, a far higher circle in society than that in which she now moves. Indeed, as she now is, I would not give her for a

dozen of the gilded, artificial women whom it has been my lot to meet in society."

"Who is this Fanny Lincoln, sister?" he asked that evening, lifting his eyes from a book that he had in vain been endeavouring to understand, the sweet face of Fanny ever forming in his imagination, and interrupting all concentration of thought.

"How do you think I should know, Frank?" Isabella said with some surprise in her tones. "All I know about her is, that she is servant to Mrs. Grand, the dairyman's wife."

"Don't say servant, in that peculiar tone of contempt. If it is the lot of Fanny to serve others—even a dairyman's wife—she is none the less beautiful, innocent, and excellent in character. Isabella, if you really want to do something good and noble, go to Mrs. Grand's and interest yourself for that sweet flower, springing in the wilderness. Take Fanny under your care, and teach her all she wishes to learn. You will find her an apt scholar, and she will fully repay, in gratitude and affection, all your kind care and generous solicitude."

"Really, Frank, you are getting into a strange way!" Isabella said. "You certainly don't think, for a moment, that I am going to imitate your erratic folly. It is enough for one of us, surely, to consort with the vulgar, unrefined and uneducated. As for me, let me tell you, Frank, I am not going to join you in any of your mad schemes for breaking through the just distinctions of society."

"You misunderstand me, Isabella, entirely," Frank urged. "I have no desire to break through any just distinctions. I only wish to give to those below us in the social rank, all the aid I can to enable them to rise, even above me, if by native excellence of character, justly developed, they are able to do so."

"You work alone in this, let me tell you," Isabella replied, with marked emphasis.

"I am sorry for that, sister. I was in hopes that you would take Fanny under your kind care, but, as you will not, the duty must devolve upon your brother."

"Frank!"

"Don't look so astonished, my gentle sister."

"Well, I am astonished, and mortified."

"Mortified at what?"

"That you should have no higher or more manly ideas—nothing more elevated as a rule of action than the simple, vulgar desire to become the amanuensis, and now, I suppose, the schoolmaster, of the whole village."

"Could there be any higher or more manly desire, than that of doing good, Isabella? I think not. For my part I am learning, every day, to estimate actions by a new standard—the standard of usefulness to others. And I feel glad to think, that I experience as lively a pleasure in doing good to a ploughman or a dairymaid, as to a so-called lady or gentleman."

"But see where it will end, brother!"

"That I am yet unable to see, and would be very glad if my sister would enlighten me."

"Then I can tell you in a very few words. The end will be this: Your position, and my position, will be broken down in society. We will be respected neither by the high nor low; the one will avoid, while the other will trespass upon and annoy us."

"Fear no such consequences. We possess an antidote to all this."

"And what is that, Frank?"

"We are, brother and sister, alone in the world, and were there not some talismanic influence at work, should long since have passed from the eye of general observation, and from the point of interest."

"And, pray, what wonderful power is that which makes us hold our rank?"

"That power is *money*, sister! We have been left rich by our parents, and herein lies the secret of our estimation. Thousands are passing their lives in obscurity, with better hearts and better principles, and more extensive knowledge than we. What makes the difference? *Money!* It is not our worth, then, that gives us consideration, but our money. For my part, I am learning every day to despise this grovelling estimation. I would not give the single expressive look of gratitude on the honest face of an old, unsophisticated farmer's wife after I have written for and read to her a letter to her absent daughter, for it all."

Isabella could not satisfy her mind as to the kind of reply that she should make to this, and so remained silent. Frank resumed the study of his book, and the subject was dismissed for that evening.

For several days in succession, Frank Beverly's study was graced by the welcome presence of Fanny Lincoln. Her simple manners, and ingenuousness, pleased the young man more and more every time he saw her. But he was more pleased at witnessing the remarkable progress that she made in learning to write.

One morning, about a week after she had commenced taking lessons, young Beverly was disappointed in not seeing her at the usual hour. He knew not how deep an interest the simple-hearted maiden had awakened in his bosom, until, by her failure to come at the regular time, the real strength of this interest became apparent.

On the next day he looked for Fanny at the usual hour of her visit, but she came not. Her failure to appear on the third day determined him to call over at Mrs. Grand's and see what detained her. As he came up the walk that led to the cottage door he caught a single glance of Fanny's face at the window, but it was instantly withdrawn. It was some moments before his knock was answered, and then he was admitted by Mrs. Grand herself, a woman of many excellent qualities, not the least of which were good sense and an affectionate disposition. She had often seen Frank, and knew him very well, although he had no recollection of her gentle, matronly face, for she had resided in the village but a few years.

"Mrs. Grand, I believe?" Frank said, with a bow.



"That is my name, Mr. Beverly. Will you walk in, sir?"

"For a moment or two, if you please. I have come over," he resumed, after he had taken a chair, "to have a word with you about Fanny Lincoln. You know, I suppose, that I have been teaching her to write. For the last few days she has not come as usual, and as she makes such great progress it is a pity that she should not keep on until she can write well. It is to talk with you about this that I have dropped in."

Frank paused, and Mrs. Grand remained silent for some moments, in the effort to collect her thoughts, and then raising her mild eyes to the face of the young man, and looking steadily at him, she said—

"Fanny is an innocent-minded, simple-hearted, good girl, and did not imagine, until I suggested it to her, that there was any impropriety in one of her age visiting, regularly, at his room, a young gentleman."

Mrs. Grand paused here, and let her eyes fall to the floor, while Frank smiled good-humouredly as he replied—

"I certainly respect your sentiments, and now that my thoughts recur to the subject, must own that you are right. But I am sure Fanny came to me only under the impulse of genuine innocence of heart."

"In that you are right, Mr. Beverly," Mrs. Grand replied with warmth. "I know Fanny well, for, from a little child I have been to her a mother, and she the gentlest and most affectionate of daughters. She is pure-minded and innocent as the snow-drift."

"I am sure of that, Mrs. Grand," Frank said; and then after a brief pause added, "The more I have seen of Fanny the more have I been interested in her; particularly in reference to her strong desire to learn. This desire, Mrs. Grand, ought, by all means to be fostered, and as you rightly suggest the impropriety of her coming to my room, if you will permit me to call here every day, and give her a lesson, in your presence, if you choose, I will most willingly come."

"Your offer is too kind a one for me to reject, and I therefore willingly accept it, knowing as I do so well the character of Francis Beverly," Mrs. Grand replied, frankly. "I know," she continued, "and have often grieved over Fanny's want of education. But since she came to us, a friendless orphan, we have had hard struggling to get along in the world, and have been unable to send her to school, except for a very short time. I taught her to read, which was about as far as I could go, and she reads, I think, very well indeed."

"Then, if it is agreeable to both Fanny and yourself, I will give her, now that I am here, another lesson," Frank said, for he was altogether unwilling to go away without seeing his fair young pupil, and having a word or two with her.

Mrs. Grand arose without replying, and left the room. In a few minutes she returned with Fanny, whose heightened colour, and slight embarrassment

and agitation, told the young man at once, that since he had last met her, new thoughts and emotions had stirred in her bosom.

We will not linger to detail the particulars of this interview, nor to chronicle the wonderful improvement apparent at each new lesson that she received from her excellent teacher. Certain it was, that she never seemed tired of acquiring nor her preceptor of teaching her. From mere penmanship her attention was soon turned to books, and day after day, and week after week, nay, and month after month, Fanny Lincoln wandered by the fountains of learning, and explored new regions of knowledge opened to her eager thoughts, with Francis Beverly, her faithful Mentor, ever by her side. In a month from the time that she took her first lesson, she wrote to her brother with her own hand, and so much did it resemble that in which Frank had written, imitating as he had, purposely, a woman's small light chirography, that the difference was not known. The correspondence between them now became exceedingly interesting. He was, it appeared, a lawyer of standing and intelligence, in Charleston, South Carolina, engaged in an extensive practice. Important business, he said, would keep him away from her at least six months, but he urged her to come to him at once. But she wrote to him, that she would prefer remaining with the kind friends, though poor and humble in life, who had been to her father and mother when there was none to take her in, until he could come to her. He then sent her a considerable sum of money, and kept up with her a frequent correspondence, in which he seemed desirous of learning as much of her cast of mind and habits of thinking as possible. All these letters, in the simplicity of her heart, she submitted to Frank, and also her answers; and any suggestions of his were promptly adopted by the maiden.

The frequent visits of the young man to Mrs. Grand's soon became village talk, greatly to the annoyance of his stately sister Isabella, who let no opportunity pass of remonstrating with him upon the subject. This he took all very kindly, and still continued to pursue his own course. One evening as they sat together, she said to him in a tone of concern—

"I wish you would give up your foolish visits to that Fanny Lincoln."

"Why so, sister?"

"Because, everybody is talking about you."

"Well, and what do they say?" inquired Frank, quite composedly.

"Why, they say of course, that you are going to marry that girl," Isabella replied in an indignant tone.

"Do they, indeed! Well, really, it is strange how things of this kind will get out."

"Brother! what do you mean?" exclaimed Isabella, springing to her feet as suddenly as if a pistol had been fired by her ear.

"Why, I mean to marry Fanny Lincoln," replied the young man, in a calm tone of voice.

For a few moments the sister was so bewildered and confounded that she could not speak. At length she said—

"You but trifle with me, brother."

"Indeed, I do not," Frank said, in a serious tone. "I have spent four months now, in the daily study of Fanny Lincoln's character, and am prepared to pronounce her far superior to any young lady that it has been thus far my lot to meet."

Poor Isabella was for a time mute with surprise.

"Surely," she at length said, "my brother is not going to disgrace himself and his sister thus!"

"How can it be disgrace to marry Fanny Lincoln?" he asked.

"Who is she, or what is she, but the servant of a dairyman's wife?" Isabella replied with warmth.

"I will tell you," Frank said, calmly. "She is the adopted daughter of Mrs. Grand, who has raised her with all the care her condition would allow her to bestow. She is pure, and gentle, and innocent—"

"And ignorant, and vulgar, and forward, and—"

"Not by any means," Frank said interrupting his sister. "For four months she has been applying herself to books with an eagerness and assiduity that has produced what I must call wonderful results. Few young ladies of my acquaintance, in this village, except indeed my sister, have mastered more substantial volumes than she. And what she reads she understands and retains. As to vulgarity, Isabella, you are again mistaken. Nature formed her a lady, in mind and action. Few, let me assure you, have more ease of manner or more true maidenly dignity of character. And forward she is not, but is rather inclined to shrink, and this shrinking disposition seems to increase more and more every day."

But nothing that Frank could say had any effect in reconciling his sister. She would not consent to see her, and solemnly declared, that if he married her, and brought her to the house, she would leave it.

It soon became known through all the village, that Frank took no pains to conceal it, that he was going to marry Fanny Lincoln. All wondered, but the young ladies in the high life of the place, with their mothers, were indignant that the young man should so disgrace himself. Poor Isabella was pitied, and sympathized with, and one young lady actually volunteered to try and charm the lover off, all for the sake of her dear Isabella; but to no purpose. Frank was impenetrable. Fanny was talked about, and sneered at, and made the subject of all kinds of ill-natured remarks; but she was happy in the love of an honest and generous heart, and knew nothing of the indignation she was exciting.

"He needn't think to introduce the low creature here," said Miss Elvira Comstock to the circle of

young ladies who were passing an afternoon with her.

"Indeed he needn't," responded her sister Thomasine. "If he chooses to lower himself in that way let him, but such as Fanny Lincoln never darkens our door."

"What a strange preference!" remarked one.

"That proves what he is," said another.

"How much I have been deceived in my estimation of him!" added another.

"Well, girls, we have all made a happy escape," said Elvira Comstock, "for there are some of us, I am thinking, who would not have said 'no' to Frank Beverly."

"Indeed, then, you are mistaken if you think I would," broke in one.

"I never liked him," said another.

"I always thought him low minded," added a third.

"It is all just as I expected," remarked a fourth. And then all joined in abusing Frank Beverly and Fanny Lincoln with might and main.

But, time wore on, and the period was fixed for Frank's marriage: one week before it took place a stage brought to the town two strangers, a gentleman and lady, whose appearance at once drew the attention of the gossiping villagers.

Scarcely half an hour elapsed after their arrival before the man walked out from the inn at which they had stopped, and took his way towards Mrs. Grand's cottage. His knock at the door was answered by Fanny.

"Fanny Lincoln?" said he in an inquiring tone.

"That is my name, sir," replied the maiden, her heart leaping in her bosom with a sudden bound.

"And mine is Henry Lincoln," he said, and instantly the happy creature was clinging to him and sobbing like a child, in the ecstasy of a new delight.

\* \* \* \* \*

The wedding was celebrated at the old family mansion of the Beverlys, where Frank and his sister resided. Among the guests were Elvira Comstock, her sister, and indeed the whole circle of the village exclusives, each of whom vied in attentions to the lovely bride, whose beauty and excellence were all suddenly discovered and appreciated. Among the most conspicuous of the company were Henry Lincoln, the distinguished and *wealthy* member of the southern bar, and his young and beautiful wife, to whom he had been married only a few months.

All but Fanny, from this time, forgot her humble origin, but she remained as affectionate and as attentive as ever to the friends who had loved her and cherished her from childhood. Isabella soon learned to appreciate her and to love her tenderly, and Frank Beverly ever after blessed the day that brought Fanny Lincoln to the Village Amanuensis.

## FASHIONABLE BENEVOLENCE.

We do too much relax the social chain  
That binds us to each other: slight the care  
There is for grief in which we have no share.

"And she works exquisitely, too, so much better than that impudent Mrs. Blanchard, who, if you will believe it, Ann, never put on that double frill, even after my express directions; and I, nothing doubting but that the creature had done as I told her, never perceived the omission until I put on the dress to wear to a ball."

"But where did you hear of this poor woman, Emma, who works so well and so cheap? She must be destitute to do it for such a trifle."

"O yes, she is wretchedly poor, with a family of children, and her husband dead or absent. Our girl, Mary, accidentally found her out, and told me she thought Mrs. M., (that is the woman's name) would be glad to sew for me; so I sent for her, and bargained her down, until she was willing to do it for almost anything, rather than not at all. But all this is *entre nous*, for you know I could not withdraw my patronage from my former seamstress, to bestow it on a new one, unless she was cheaper. I thought she might sew for you when she was not engaged for me. It is something of an object to save more than half what we give Mrs. Blanchard."

"I am delighted to think you have met with such a prize, for I am convinced that these fashionable milliners and mantuamakers are monstrously expensive; and most all of the work this woman can do just as well, I dare say."

"She works beautifully; although Mary says one would not think, to see her wretched condition, that she could have the heart to do anything; that is what makes her so willing to throw away her work so, as Mrs. Blanchard would call it. Are you going to the 'Social Circle,' this afternoon, Ann?"

"Certainly: Mr. Handon is to read to us some extracts from that new novel; and besides, the object is so good. 'Angels of mercy,' you know he called us. But do you know, Emma, why Jane Gleason has never joined? She must have been invited."

"No: for I asked her myself, and her reply was, that she would inform me if she concluded to become a member of the 'Circle,' and I have never heard a word from her on the subject."

"She is very peculiar: but, as it is whispered that she does good to the poor, I thought she would be among the first to aid an enterprise like this. Did you read the description of the fair at P——? We shall have a splendid one soon; then Jane will repent of her oddity. Is it time to go?"

"Yes, a little past the hour appointed; and I must hear that affecting scene in the new novel, if it is read."

Shall we follow our young friends to the scene of their charity? Attractive as it was, we fear that it is impossible to do it justice. Bright faces might be seen grouped here and there, and fair fingers employed in every variety of fanciful ornamental devices. Gentlemen, too, who, though not privileged "to ply the polished shaft," yet credibly sustained their part as the inspirers, or inspirees.—Books, though sometimes listened to with tolerable attention, were soon thrown aside as less interesting than conversation. Dress, manners and characters were fully discussed; parties and balls projected; flirtations canvassed; "all the endless round of nothings." Emma Roberts and her cousin Ann were among the most zealous; Emma being one of the directresses of the "Social Circle."

"How handsome she is," said Henry Benton, to his friend Harwid; "and so benevolent, too. Did you hear how enthusiastically she spoke of the approaching fair? I heard her tell sister Catherine that it would do much good. How unusual to hear young ladies talk of such things! I must become acquainted with her," and crossing the room, he began an animated conversation with Miss Roberts, who failed not to convince him still more, that she was truly and uncommonly disinterested.

"I had no idea," said Henry to his sister, on their return home, "that your 'Circle' was so pleasant. I think I shall accompany you more frequently in future."

"It is sufficiently pleasant," replied Catherine, "but I sometimes doubt its utility. The work which is accomplished by the young ladies, I have feared was taken from, and thus injuring the interests of, poor persons; and the time, exertion and money thus spent in ostentation and parade, might be employed in a more simple and private way by individuals."

"You are too scrupulous, my dear Catherine; surely united effort must accomplish more than individual; and sociability and friendly feeling are thus promoted, and, as Miss Roberts said, others are benefitted."

"I hope it may be so, but do not think me censorious if I say that I sometimes think others might be benefitted still more, if those young ladies were each of them to visit those scenes of poverty and distress, and give their counsel, sympathy and assistance. Now, it seems pleasant to them to meet together, when they have no engagements, and talk in general terms of charity, etc.; but how few, it is to be feared, know what are self-denial and perseverance against obstacles, in order to do good."

"I cannot judge them so harshly. It seems to me that ladies, like Miss Roberts for instance, are more to be admired for the sincere benevolence of heart which they display, than for all the charms of person, or even of mind."

"I know nothing of Miss Roberts which would contradict that appearance of kindness, so delightful, so praiseworthy, wherever and whenever seen, of which you speak. With you I have often admired the interest she manifests in everything relating to our 'Circle,' and I only hope, my dear brother, that public and private charity may accompany each other. But I have been surprised not to see Miss Gleason at any of our meetings; she always seems social and friendly, and I have expected to meet her there."

Months passed by, bringing the wished-for fair near at hand, and report said that Henry Benton was becoming daily more pleased with the pretty, interesting and benevolent Miss Roberts. No one could approve of these on dits, or wish that they might prove true, more ardently than the lady herself; for Mr. Benton was, as the fathers would have styled him, a safe party, the mothers, a desirable, and the daughters, a perfect one. With wealth, rank, talents, joined to accomplished manners and integrity, his society was universally courted. As yet, however, he had never paid his devoirs at any fair shrine; but, like the most of those whom fashion (or interest) has not moulded to do her bidding; he had a beau ideal in his own mind of the being whom he should wish to call his own, and that had never been realized. Miss Roberts, attractive as she was in person, would probably have excited in him no peculiar interest, had not her apparent benevolence of heart won his attention. One who could talk thus eloquently of relieving suffering, must, he thought, be amiable to no common degree. She could not be one of those frivolous, heartless beings, absorbed in selfish gratification, thinking not of the responsibility devolving upon them, and forgetting

"The sacred ties that bind us each to each."

It was a cold and dreary night when Henry Benton and his sister sat by their cheerful fire, conversing on the merits of a book, from which he had just been reading. Every thing around looked bright and pleasant, and it might well seem almost impossible for the inmates of that dwelling to think any one could be less happy than themselves. It seems to be the natural effect of extremes of joy or sorrow, to prevent us from realizing the misery of others. It is difficult for the heart bounding with joy, to whom all things around bear *la couleur de rose*, to imagine the smaller miseries or greater sufferings of others, and

one who is himself plunged into the depth of unhappiness, is too apt to be absorbed by the consideration of his own calamities. Our friends were not selfish, but certain it is, that the misfortunes which "flesh is heir to," were not present to their minds, when Catherine was informed that a poor woman that lived near by, was or had been very sick.

"You were going out for a short time, Henry," said she to her brother, "and I will go with you to this woman's house, where you can call for me as you return."

"Do not venture out such an evening as this, Catherine. You can send some one to inquire into her circumstances and give her aid."

"But I shall be better satisfied to see how she does myself—nay, do not object, my dear brother," she added, smiling, "do you think the cold can penetrate through all this fur! I know the exercise will benefit me. Come, let us go."

"This is the house," said she, as they arrived at the dwelling where she had been told the object of her visit resided. "Now, you can come for me as you return," and she gently opened the door of a room where a light faintly glimmered. But she was not, as she afterwards declared, prepared for the scene that met her view. In a miserable hut, insufficient to protect its inmates from the inclemency of the weather, was extended the sick woman on a low bed, supported by Miss Gleason, who was administering a cordial.—The apartment, too, though indicating poverty, bore an air of neatness, and little comforts were strewed here and there, as if some kind hand had lent its aid.

"And you are here before me, Jane?" said Catherine, advancing towards her.

"Yes, I have been here some time. Mrs. M. has been very sick, but she seems more comfortable now."

"I had never heard of her until to-day," answered Catherine, "or I should have visited her before. I have brought her some trifles, which I hope may benefit her till we can do something more."

The sick woman groaned—"Oh! if I had what is justly my due, I need not trouble others so much. "Lady," said she, striving to speak distinctly, "long, long nights I never closed my eyes to sleep, striving to earn something for myself and my poor children. She told me unless I did the work cheap, I could not have it, and I did it almost for nothing rather than not do it at all; but I have never been paid even that."

"Who employed you, Mrs. M——?" asked Catherine.

"Miss Roberts sent for me, and gave me her sewing to do, and last night she sent me word, that unless I completed some work

which I had out for a week, she must withdraw it all from me."

"Do not agitate yourself about it, Mrs. M." said Miss Gleason, gently; "your wants shall be supplied until you are able to exert yourself without injury."

"But, my dear young lady, I cannot but think of it. I should not have minded it for myself, for I am sure, unless I could hope to show my gratitude for your kindness, and to watch over my children, I have nothing to live for, but to think of them." Mr. Benton at this instant stepped in at the door, but not being perceived, he did not interrupt her, by accosting his sister. "I have seen them cry for bread, and I told Miss Roberts that, destitute as I was, I could sew for anything that would procure them bread. Long nights I have never slept, but laboured without a moment's rest to procure them something. And when I asked her for the money, she said she never paid those little sums till they amounted to something; and added, she could not stop, either, for she was going to some society, or 'Circle,' as she called it, and could not listen. I came home, but I could support it no longer; I could not even go out to beg food, and oh, my children! I must have perished had it not been for this angel," said she, turning to Miss Gleason, with tears in her eyes, and then sinking back exhausted with the effort of speaking.

"She shall not be alone for the future, in her errands of mercy," said Catherine, hardly able to speak. "Rejoice," added she, turning, as she perceived her brother, "that I came here, Henry, for I have learnt a lesson not soon to be forgotten."

The character and life of Jane Gleason were indeed worthy of being remembered and imitated. With a gifted and cultivated mind, she had a feeling heart and firm principles. Although every way fitted, if she had been so inclined, to become "the glass of fashion and the mould of form," she chose rather to improve the talents committed to her charge, to higher and nobler purposes.—In her charity she was constant and kind, and scrupulously followed His example who "went about doing good;" and although her name might never have been seen in the public prints, as "lady president" or directress of public societies, or a graceful presider over a fair, it was graven in the heart of many a widow and orphan, whom she gladdened by kindness. To those who feel interested in the fate of Mrs. M., we will add, that she did recover, and through the efforts of her friends, was enabled to maintain herself and her family comfortably, of course with more generous employers than Miss Roberts, who still continues her enthusiasm for public charity, although we will confess, it has never since

excited so much admiration in Henry Benton. The scene at the cottage often recurs to his memory. Since the evening of which we speak, he has seen Jane Gleason the centre of attraction in the circle of her friends, exhibiting all the graces of mind and person; but never has she looked more lovely in his eyes, and never has found her less worthy to be the companion of joy and sorrow, the sharer and the heightener of one, the reliever of the other; than when in that poor dwelling he saw her dispensing alleviation to the afflicted, and affording such a striking contrast to fashionable benevolence.

## FEMALE FIDELITY.

BY L. F. FISLER.

'Twas on a Sabbath morning, in the month of June, 1828, I was summoned to visit a young lady residing about — miles distant from the beautiful village of Port E\*\*\*\*\*, in which I then resided. She was one whom I had known from infancy, and had long been intimately acquainted with her family. She was her father's only child, the idol of his aged heart, and the hope and solace of his latter days. Just entering her seventeenth year, with a mind highly cultivated, and a sensibility alive to every amiable impression, she became a fit object to love and be beloved. Her youth had been passed in quietness and seclusion, in a celebrated female seminary at Burlington. Grief and sorrow were unknown to her, and she knew not of the troubles and trials of this weary world of woe. Because Mary was innocent.

The communication I received, strongly excited my apprehensions, that without immediate haste, my presence or services would be entirely unavailable. Accordingly, without delay, I was soon fast approaching the object of my visit. The light of another day had just begun to dawn upon the world; the calm and quiet hour of morning twilight, when the dark shadows of night are fast mingling with the rays of approaching day. It was at that bewitching and enchanting period of time, when all creation seems to feel and acknowledge the supreme and overwhelming power of Omnipotence; all nature, smiling in reanimated beauty, paying homage and adoration to Him who is its great Divine Creator. Whether the high mountain peak that mingles with the clouds, clothed with eternal snows, or the low sequestered glen beneath, carpeted with the verdure of nature—whether the tall, sturdy, towering oak that decks the forest, or the tiny bird which warbles among its branches—all eloquently proclaim the wisdom and power of that hand, which has been the Author of them all.

A thousand reflections hurried through my mind, as I travelled along the lonely road which led to the abode of Mary and her aged parents. Can it be possible, thought I, again and again—that she whom I had seen so recently, flushed with health and beauty—the charms of cheerfulness upon her lips, the joy and pride of her family, was now the victim of disease and probably of death? Relentless, cruel spoiler! how dost thou love to revel and riot among the charms of female loveliness, withering like an early blight the rose that blooms on beauty's cheek, dashing at one fell swoop to the grave, all their hopes and expectations here, there to lie, and fade, and

perish! How dost thou, with thy sturdy foot, love to trample over the fair, fragile forms of those we once loved, but now can love no more.

Indulging in this sad train of melancholy musing, I found I had approached the house without being conscious of the distance passed over. I was soon ushered into the chamber of the sick. There lay the wreck of one, who, but a short time since, was glowing with health and vigor, exulting in the buoyancy of youth, and the "consciousness of existence." Death's dark doings were depicted on her countenance. I advanced to the bed—she seized my hand with a convulsive grasp (which I can never forget) pressing it with a power as if all her expiring energies at that moment were concentrated in her fingers—she exclaimed—"Doctor, am I not dying? I have not sent for you professionally. I well know it is now too late to derive any benefit from your skill. I have sent for you as an acquaintance, as a friend, and especially so, as the esteemed friend of Frank Woodville. You know him, Doctor?"

"Intimately well, Mary. He is now," I remarked, "absent on a visit to his friends in Massachusetts."

"Yes," she replied, "I know it, and immediately after his return, we were to be united in marriage. He is making the preparatory arrangements for that anticipated joyful event—and I must make preparations for the sad solemnities of death and the grave, with all their dreary appendages."

I endeavored to soothe her by stating she might not be so near her end as she apprehended. But if she believed life to be so nearly at its close, her mind and all its affections should be directed and fixed upon Him only, who was able and willing to support and sustain her in the hour of affliction and distress.

She bestowed on me an inexpressible look of calmness and composure—a faint smile playing round her mouth—remarking, "Doctor, this have I attended to, long before sickness brought my head to this pillow—and I can now say with the Psalmist of old, 'though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.' Doctor, I have a few words to say to you, and I feel by my increasing weakness, that they must be said soon." With an earnestness of expression which I shall ever remember, she said, "you will see Frank Woodville again—I never shall! Tell him I love him dearly and sincerely. He has made that avowal time without number. I never have. This has not arisen from a want of affection—but from my youth and the natural diffidence and timidity of my sex. \* \* \*

Doctor, please remove this lock of hair." I immediately separated the large black ringlet which she held in her hand, overshadowing her brow and contrasting beautifully with the marble whiteness of its surface.

"Give this to Frank Woodville, and tell him it is a gift from Mary! Tell him I love him. Oh, could I only sound those few short words in his hearing, I would leave the world contentedly, yes, triumphantly. Tell him the last words his dear Mary ever uttered—the last accents that quivered upon the cold, pulseless lip of Mary, was the endeared name of Frank Woodville!"

My feelings had now completely overcome me. I sat beside her with my face concealed with my handkerchief. She seized my hand again, and with a death-like grasp, uttered in a feeble indistinct tone, "tell F r a n k W o o d ———"

A momentary pause ensued. I looked around—one short, suppressed, spasmodic gasp terminated the struggles of the lovely Mary. All was over. The spirit had fled, and in its flight, had left impressed upon her face a beautiful serenity of countenance, a placidness of expression, as if the soul had begun to taste the joys of Heaven before it had left the clay tenement of earth.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the course of a fortnight Frank returned, but not to his Mary. His soul was congealed in agony. The preparations for the nuptial knot were thrown aside for the sad "habiliments of woe." All was sorrow, sadness and distress. The hand that was to unite with his was now motionless in the grave; that voice which he had so often listened to with ecstasy and delight, was now choked in dust. The glowing cheek on which he had so lately imprinted the parting kiss, was now mouldering and mingling with its kindred dust. All the sad memorials left him in this general wreck of all—was the sacred lock of hair—a mound of earth—and a modest stone which told him where his Mary lay.

Should this painful narrative ever meet the eye of Frank Woodville, I fear it will open wounds afresh, which have long been closed by the plastic hand of time, but which never can be cured.

Original.

## FIRE-SIDE GLEANINGS.

### CHAPTER I.

IN looking over the pages of the Repository, whose heart will not involuntarily swell with pleasurable emotion, as the eye rests upon the many tributes so frequently paid at the shrine of affectionate remembrance! and who would wish to check the rising tear, or suppress the smile which nature prompts when some interesting passage recalls to mind our own experience of joy or sorrow? How pleasant, too, is the assurance that we are not smiling or weeping over scenes which never existed save in the imagination of the writer; and although we may at first find it more wearisome to follow the straight forward path of truth than to revel in the alluring but false creations of a distempered fancy, yet what once seemed irksome will eventually become delightful, as a taste for truth is cultivated; and while thus employed we shall not be compelled to sigh over misspent hours. It is true the mind loves excitement, and is ever grasping for knowledge, either of good or

evil. How important that these tendencies should be properly directed, and how great the responsibility of those who seek to stem the current by opposing error or upholding truth. Yet surely there is ground enough upon which to labor, and ample materials for selection. Creation throws open her store-house of wonders, while the sciences, her noble handmaids, stand ready to initiate each earnest devotee of knowledge into her mysteries. Should we prefer to read what time has written, or to improve by reviewing the faults and follies—the trials and enjoyments—“the lights and the shadows” of human existence, we need turn to nought but the romance of real life to learn the moral lesson, or excite the sympathizing tear. Again, we may profit by noting with serious attention the passing incidents which happen to ourselves, or the manners and customs peculiar to different portions of our country. We may examine minutely the ever-varying shades of character, presenting that which is morally beautiful for imitation, while the dark coloring of sin and guilt may serve as a warning and restraint. In short, our resources are boundless; and we may follow the natural turn of our own minds in the selection and description of subjects, provided truth shall be allowed to chasten thought—to guide the pen, and to hold that reckless renegade, imagination, within due bounds.

I have just received the November number of the Repository, and have been much interested in imagining the character of the mental powers of its various correspondents; but I will not venture to sketch the result of my cogitations, for fear they have led me astray, and I might lose my credit (if I may be allowed the expression) of being a *literary phrenologist*. As for myself I do not always wish to be fettered with a given subject to which I must adhere, willing or not willing. I have therefore chosen a heading which will suffer me to wander where I please; although I do not know but the *bumps* of irregularity, so plainly visible, will bewilder the reader. If so, he must turn to some more orderly page, until his ideas are regulated; for I feel in a wayward mood, and must be allowed to express my thoughts and feelings as nature wills, or not at all. A grave friend who has been looking over my shoulder, says she cannot perceive what I am aiming at. I tell her the above is only a preface; that I intend to glean a little here, and a little there, from the page of every day's experience; and if, perchance, my fugitive lines should assist in adding by variety a slight degree of interest to the Repository, I shall be content to glean on.

### CHAPTER II.

I have been thinking how much misery there is in the world, and wondering how large a share of it is real. Received a call from a lady yesterday, who is one of the favored ones of Providence in many respects. She enjoys a comfortable degree of health—is the child and heiress of wealth—has an affectionate father and mother, a kind husband and fine family of children—and more than all, is blessed (as I suppose from her profession) with the consolations of religion; yet she sighs for more. She feels desolate, because she has neither



brother nor sister, and thinks with many others, "Never was there sorrow like unto my sorrow." Alas! how many that stand in the endearing relation of brother and sister, evince any thing but a tender and affectionate regard for each other's welfare. How many, instead of assisting each other over the rough pathway of life, seem to delight in thwarting the hopes of their relatives and in destroying their comfort! I have seen families who seemed bound in bonds which death alone could sever. With what devoted love—with what a heart-felt interest would the brother regard his sisters—delighting in their improvement, and proud of their charms, either of mind or person—and how did those young confiding hearts glory in their brother—how warmly return his affection—how fully trust his love! Could time break those ties, or could selfish feelings tear them asunder? I have seen many such a loving circle separated by circumstances. As they advanced in life, I have seen the tide of selfishness sweeping on until their hearts were chilled to stone towards their first, their earliest loved; and well would it be if the foul fiend of mutual discord did not cherish mutual hate. Is this picture too deeply shaded by the truth? Let those who feel the effects of this sad change answer. But should these things be? Is there a dire necessity that life and peace should be so embittered? Those who have known the secret of preserving the hallowed influence of youthful affection will answer, no; and will answer correctly. But how shall this be done? Let the blessed Savior, the Prince of peace, give direction: "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you"—"forgive until seventy times seven," (that is, for ever.) If these golden rules were but adhered to, paradise would be restored; and although, in this fallen world, we cannot look for their universal prevalence, yet surely in the hearts of the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus they should reign supreme. The ties of grace should bind still closer the ties of nature. We should bear and forbear, knowing that we all have many faults to be forgiven; for "if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." And let us not repine at the dealings of Providence, imagining that we alone are drinking the cup of sorrow, when perhaps the very things we so earnestly covet would be sources of anguish to us were they in our possession.

M. A. DE FOREST.

## FLEANCE: A DOMESTIC STORY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE COUNTRY DOCTOR.'

### CHAPTER FIRST.

'MERCIFUL Heavens! how the guns boom! Every report tells of destruction and death. The bombardment has commenced; and if the enemy take the town, their next step will be here; and if disposed to be unmerciful,' exclaimed the youth, pausing and looking tearfully at the couch of his dying mother, 'what will become of us, already too much afflicted? There! again and again! How the panes rattle, and the whole house is jarred! Those cruel sounds will disturb her slumbers after the restless night. Draw the curtains closer around her, Mary. But I suppose it will be all in vain.' And the youth bent his head to the pillow, and kissed his mother's brow.

An aged woman sat in an antique chair by the bed-side. She was tall and stately. A certain bloom which must have been very bright upon her young cheeks had never faded away, and there was that serene composure and grace in her mien which make up a beautiful, admired old age. Hers was a serenity springing not from the perpetual absence of sorrow, or from having ever dwelt in some vale of quiet loveliness, but from an energy which had risen triumphant over the most poignant griefs, and a cheering faith which looked beyond the grave. 'My child,' said she, clasping the hand of the agitated boy, 'never let despair fasten on so young a heart. If you tremble and weep on the first threshold of life, how can you breast the mighty griefs and conflicts of the world? Learn even thus early in the hour of darkness to hope for the glimmerings of light. Though your father be dead in his country's cause, and she, poor sufferer! your only parent on earth, in God's good pleasure may soon die, learn to look up with me, and to say confidently, 'OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN!'

Tears and smiles gleamed at that same moment from the uplifted eyes of the aged woman, and she looked as if she had caught the very spirit which makes the angels happy. And then with a fine eloquence, which consisted rather in aspect and expression, and in the mournful scene, than in any words which can be committed to our page, she proceeded, holding the boy's hand still in her own: 'Let God be your refuge from this time, my son; and whenever troubles come you shall not flee to him in vain. You shall be shielded from those which are too heavy to be borne, by the merciful hand of Him who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, and you shall go forth to battle with the world with a strength not your own. Look at me, Fleance. Am not I three-score years old and ten, and have I ever despaired? I have seen nearly all who were dear to me and who set out with me in the journey of life one by one fall away from my side, until I am left almost alone and unsupported except by HIM. I have beheld my fondest hopes all

perish, and I live but to acknowledge God's goodness, and to enjoy his benefits, and yield a willing submission to his providences; and cheerfully will I abide, while I have one to love in the world, and while with these feeble arms I can sustain one drooping head. Listen to me, Fleance, and let me say now what I may not have so good an opportunity again of saying. Should your mother die ——'

The boy looked up and trembled as with an ague. 'Say not so!' said he. 'It cannot be; at least not yet—not yet! She has been better for a week past.'

'All things are possible with God, my son; let us ever hope the best. But whenever such an event may come, you will be left alone to guard your sister; she is your only one. I need not implore you to cherish and defend her. Your own kind heart prompts you to do all that. But should I too die, and the aged must expect to die soon, there are truths which you must diligently instil into her young mind, and teach her to read that blessed Book which my poor dim eyes would have delighted to teach before they were closed for ever.'

The boy's countenance sparkled with an unwonted intelligence, and stretching forth his hand involuntarily to that sacred Book which lay near, silently indicated by his looks a promise which carried with it the force and solemnity of an oath. Then dashing the tears from his eyes he ran to seek his young sister in the garden, whither she had just gone. She was playing among the flowers, wildly beautiful as they. Taking her by the hand he led her back into the melancholy apartment from which she had escaped, and made her contemplate the faded form of her parent. 'She is her mother's image,' whispered the aged woman, 'her image to the very life. The same speaking lineaments, the same auburn ringlets, the same soft large eyes.'

The child gazed about her unconsciously, awed into silence, but unable to appreciate the emotions which agitated their hearts. With the exception of the dreadful sound of the distant cannon, and the ticking of a watch, and the hard respiration of the sleeper, a hushed stillness prevailed. At last some women who were neighbors came into the room to inquire how the sick person did. They looked ominously at her, whispered among themselves, and then shook their heads. 'I have just been told,' said one, 'of a remedy which has done wonders in consumption.'

'Consumption!' exclaimed the youth, looking up in consternation, and struck with the matter-of-fact air of the speaker. The dame went on to say:

'The tea of liverwort has been known to cure the most desperate cases, if one can put any faith in what is told one. It is true our poor neighbor was not so far gone as this dear lady, but he was wonderfully ill. No one would have believed that he could live a month. He was wasted away to a shadow. He had hectic fever, night-sweats, and a cough that was painful to listen to; and he was getting worse, until some one told him to take the tea of liverwort, and he did so night and morning, and now he is a hale man, and ascribes his life to it. Depend upon it, it is a great remedy in consumption.'

'Liverwort!' exclaimed the boy, starting from his seat with eager

pleasure; 'then I know where it may be found, and I will go instantly to obtain it. It grows in the woods where Mary and I used to gather wild strawberries in June. Spare me a little while, grand-mother. The sun is three hours high, and I will gather a goodly parcel before he goes down.'

'Do not stay long, my love. Do not be absent after night-fall.'

The youth went to the door, then came back a moment, drew the curtains of the bed, and looked upon his mother's face. It was calm and peaceful, but the cheeks how sunken! At times a transient smile would flit over it, as if some pleasant image were suggested, or as if she were anticipating those happy scenes which could not be won without a struggle—the last struggle of death. He gazed long and ardently; then he took a little basket upon his arm and went out.

## CHAPTER SECOND.

As he left the cottage (it was the cottage where he had been born) he murmured to himself, as he cast a hasty glance about its portals, that all things wore an air of neglect. The vines wandered about wildly, the rose-trees drooped to the earth, and seemed to lament the hand which had ceased to care for them of late. Neatness and trim embellishments speak of life and taste and happiness and hope. But around the household where Death hovers and threatens to be present with his dark wing, flowers and all that is beautiful in the fields as well as the blue skies above them are nugatory and vain. The time may indeed come again when we may merrily keep tune with the birds of spring-time, or with the reaper as he binds the sheaves of harvest; but we have no heart to enjoy the bloom or to gather the flowers which spring up in the valley of tears. Nevertheless, the youth stretched forth his hand instinctively, and grasping a handful of half-blown roses which grew from a single stalk, placed them in the crown of his hat as he hastened forth upon his filial errand. He took a solitary path which led to the neighboring woods. He had just turned an angle of it, when a young woman met him from a near cottage. She might have been a year older than himself, and he stopped to converse with her a moment; and the conversation was with the easy familiarity of those who from their childhood had been friends. 'The good news has already reached us,' said she, brightening in all her features; 'the enemy have been repulsed.'

'The enemy!' exclaimed the youth, reflecting back the same sudden joy, and holding the girl's hand; 'I seem at this moment to have none upon earth.'

A crimson hue flashed over her cheeks and then receded as suddenly. A winning story had been told without words. Minutes winged their flight; but hours would have seemed as minutes. At last the youth reproached himself for tarrying so long, and hurried on without revealing to her his errand. He could not help glancing backward once; he saw her retreating form, and smiled. She was one whom having once seen one might well look back upon, and by virtue

of that second glance the heart would take her image indelibly; and if she were never seen again, it would be an ERA in that HEART'S HISTORY. He walked with quicker step and with a better spirit. He felt happier than before. The gloom of external things had in a measure vanished, and they appeared in all their natural pleasantness, and his heart swelled with a calm courage, and his destiny seemed more clear. Thus it is that a beautiful compensation is visible in God's severe providence; and when one affection is blasted or buried, there springs up a newer, sweeter one, sometimes from its very grave.

The youth went into the woods and began to search diligently and not without success for the plant which he had heard spoken of. He knew it by its pale flower, not unlike the violet. He pictured to himself its healing qualities, and he put the plants into the little basket with a firm confidence that they might bring back the hue of health to his mother's cheek and happiness to his home. And certainly a simpler cause than a slender flower has sometimes been sufficient to avert the shafts of death. He was very happy in this occupation, and labored until his back was weary, when perceiving that the sun was nearly down, and remembering his promise, he directed his footsteps toward home. He had proceeded a short distance, when he stopped to refresh the plants at a pure spring which bubbled up on the edge of the wood.

As he was engaged in this way, reclining idly on the turf, he was attracted by a sudden noise, and looking behind him saw four men of a rude aspect, who were unknown to him. He was not alarmed, except at the suddenness of their presence, apprehending nothing. But in an instant, before he could make any resistance or utter any cry, his mouth was closed, his arms were tightly pinioned, and he was dragged by a lonely path down to the water's edge. The ruffians then placed him in a boat which lay ready, manned the oars, and pulled rapidly from the shore. Twilight concealed the deed. He had been hurried away by a press-gang.

### CHAPTER THIRD.

WHEN the evening was far advanced, and he did not return home, surprise and alarm seized on the unhappy household. What ulterior object could have detained him? He was too well acquainted with the thoroughfares to have lost his path in the woods or ignorantly to have strayed to a distance. The neighboring people were kind, and participated in the apprehension. They took lanterns and commenced a vigilant search; but they saw nothing except the flare of the lights as they streamed over chasm and ravine and rivulet, relieving the intense darkness. They stopped at intervals, making the woods ring with their shouts; the only response which they received was the echo of their own voices. The next day they renewed the search with the same success, but they found the basket filled with liverwort by the spring; and unable to trace his footsteps, they returned, and said that he must have strayed to the river and been drowned.

The night which came on was indeed gloomy in the chamber of the

dying. A storm which had been long brewing burst upon the earth with relentless fury. The large, heavy drops dashed against the panes of glass, and the heavens were incessantly lit up with sharp lightning. If the wanderer indeed lived and was in the woods, which at that time were thick and inextricable, and extended for many miles in that vicinity, what but divine power could preserve him without food or shelter through the inclement night! A child had been once bewildered in these same woods, and they were unable to discover its hiding-place, though sometimes near enough to listen to its feeble cries, until at last it was found by chance on a winter's day, lying on the ground, with berries in its hand, naked and starved and frozen.

The aged woman sat by the bed-side rocking to and fro, or with her head bent down upon her hands in agony. But her spirit was absorbed in prayer to the Father who ordereth all things in his providence; and pausing not to inquire why the innocent were afflicted, or to deprecate His rod, she begged only for sustenance, and that all things might work together for good. And it is the prayer of such which bringeth peace to the spirit, and causeth it to be lifted heavenward above the vapors of the low earth, as the fragile plant beaten down with storms looks up to salute the sun-god. When she arose from the conflict she exhibited the same serene composure which had so long glowed upon her visage, as if it came from some perpetual source. Yet not unconsonant, a tear of pure pity stole from her eye. She noticed the small basket containing the healing plants, remembering by whose hand they had been plucked, and resolving to try their virtue, singled out a few, and placed them over the fire to be boiled. But the last tribute of an affection so touchingly bestowed was vain. The sick woman arousing, demanded impatiently her absent son. They invented some tale, which little satisfied her mind, that he had gone to a distance to obtain efficacious medicines, and would soon return.

The storm howled without. At midnight, when the taper burned dimly on the hearth, and the little Mary slept in her couch as soundly and as sweetly as if there were no troubles either within or without, and only the watchers were up, a flash, a crash, blinding, appalling, burst on the very roof, and a sulphureous vapor filled the house; and rising above the winds and pelting rain without, a cry struck upon the startled ear, 'FIRE, FIRE, FIRE!' The alarm spread far and wide, and a crowd assembled, gazing astonished at the rare spectacle. The flames spread upward and burst out in every quarter, and whirled round, and irretrievably wrapt the whole house; and in the deep confusion, forth from the crackling rafters and the ashes of a once happy home a litter was hastily borne to the nearest house which offered shelter; and there many steps were passing in and out, and strange faces gazed on the dying.

It was a scene of wonder, confusion, terror. No master-spirit directed the agitated people; and on the first moment when the houseless family could reflect with calmness, they discovered that the little Mary was missing. Painful suspense reigned in their bosoms, and a messenger hastened to bring tidings; but at that moment a rough kind rustic brought in the frightened child, and she clung trembling

to the neck of her old relative. An ejaculation, a burst of thanksgiving came from the lips of the latter. Then she consigned the child to the arms of another, and turned to watch with attentive eye a fearful paroxysm of the mother. Merciful Heavens! one other such, and she would cease to live. But her spirit yet lingered a little around earth, although full plumed for heaven; and willing to impart with her lips the last kiss, and to breathe the last farewell, she murmured passionately, though with a faltering voice: 'MY SON! MY SON!—WHERE IS MY SON!'

---

#### CHAPTER FOURTH.

HE was far away over the wide, wide sea. When he had been so ruthlessly torn from his home on the evening when he had gone forth on such a worthy errand, as soon as he had recovered a little from his surprise, he became conscious by the plashing of oars and the sound of the water on the keel that he was in the hands of sea-faring men; but whither borne or for what purpose he could form no conjecture. Not a word was exchanged among the ruffian gang, but they pulled hard at the oars, and toward the river's mouth. In an hour or more they came under the dark shadows of a ship's deck, and forcing the youth to ascend a steep ladder, instantly ushered him upon scenes which were to him those of a new life. When he knew that the sails were set, and felt himself borne swiftly away, he could not tell whither, he supplicated and wept in agony, surprise, and rage. It was all futile. The breeze blew freshly, and when the morning dawned he was far from the home of his childhood and from the friends of his youth. As he looked in the direction of the dim shores, and endeavored to recall the events of the night, he could hardly trust the evidence of his senses as to what had really happened, for all appeared like a dream. As however the full reality burst upon his mind, he was ready to die with the most violent paroxysms of grief.

Days passed over him, and he learned to submit to the hard necessity of such a cruel bondage, yielding a silent, sullen obedience, and jeered at by the rude companions of his life. He went mechanically about his allotted tasks, wrapt in a sort of oblivion, except when a memory of the past flashing over his mind drove him to the very brink of madness. One day he had ascended to the mast-head, and as far as his eye could reach looked over the vast magnificent sea. It was calm and silent, and not a sail was to be descried over all the boundless expanse. Weary and sick at heart, he sought for some token of his childhood's home; and as he drew forth the withered roses whose fragrance was not all gone, by them he pledged himself that he never would forget his lost friends. Then the circumstances of his departure recurring to him, and how he had been robbed of his mother's parting blessing, and that he might never return to his native village again, but for the intervention of some good genius, he would have leaped into the sea. As he lay in his hammock, and ventured to reflect at all, the same madness and despair possessed him; and in a transport he stretched forth his hand to grasp an instrument of death, and his heart

encouraged him to commit the great crime; but a torrent of tears coming instantly to his relief removed the weight which oppressed him; and remembering at that moment the admonitions last given by one whom he had loved, and whom he never expected to behold again, he lifted up his swollen eyes and exclaimed, 'OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN!'

#### CHAPTER FIFTH.

THEN he fell into a tranquil repose. Wandering back to the untroubled scenes of his life, he was on the firm land, listening to the song of the birds, and to the murmuring of streams, and to the music of his native fields. The errand on which he had gone had proved successful, and there was a magical virtue in the plants he had gathered, which had restored the lost bloom to his mother's cheeks; and he saw one radiant with beauty, whose love could never change, but was reserved for him to make his life happy. All this was a sweet dream. But it did not make the morning wretched which scattered its brief illusion, but imparted a firmer courage, and seemed a welcome assurance of that which was to be. Thus Hope like a sweet singer follows us wherever we go upon earth; and though she may not deceive our vigilant hours, she leads the unguarded mind gently captive in dreams. Once as the youth looked abroad from his station, with only the sea around him and the heaven above him, as the hart panteth for the water brooks so his soul desired the word of God.

Nor was the wish which might have been considered a silent prayer unheard or ungranted. A comrade was committed solemnly to the deep. He obtained one relic found among his treasures, and on the title-page of the book was engraven 'HOLY BIBLE.' Had he left his own home a willing wanderer, such would have been the last and best gift which with the kiss of parting affection would have been bestowed; and it is hard and it is perilous to go far, far away on the long weary journeys of adventure or ambition, without this only chart, to guide to a protected haven, or to bring back the erring footsteps to the paths of innocence and peace. Weary, dejected, spirit-stricken, the youth found golden promises and a certain solace in God's Book. He made it his companion (for he found none other) at morning and at noon, and at midnight; in sunshine and in storm and in battle; and it shared his safety; and when the ship struck a coral-reef, he swam with it in triumph to the desert shore.

Years rolled over him, and the contact of the rude world had wrought its transforming influence on his character. He had armed his soul with a stern strength and resolution, and for the imbecility of youth he had exchanged the vigor and energy of manhood. During the long interval he had no tidings or missives from the home which he had never ceased to remember with tears and sadness. At last with emotions which cannot be defined (for so much of pain and doubt was mingled with a sense of pleasure) he found himself wasted toward the very haven whence he had set out. Here in terror and agony and



compulsion he had commenced his wanderings, and he could not tell what termination they might now have. He had found his country, but he knew not where to look for his home.

Nevertheless with a bounding throb he leaped upon his native shore, and leaving the busy mart, directed his swift steps by a well-remembered path into the fields. The sun was sinking low in the sky, and the summer air was sweet; and instead of the rustling of cordage and the beating of waves he heard the evening carol of the birds. How sweet the transition from the dreary immensity of ocean to the verdant limits of fields and groves! Oh! who can know, save he whose heart has sprung toward the sea, and bounded like a bird in triumph over the waste of waters, what rapture it is to visit the land once more, to witness the sweet round of the seasons, to behold the verdure of fields, the foliage of trees, and the beauty of flowers; to listen to the lowing of herds upon the hills, to the noisy gladness of the running rill, to the murmur of winds through the solemn groves, and to suspend the votive chaplet in the temple where he offers up his prayers! As he advanced upon his path, every step seemed to awaken old images, and the whole train of associations which connects the present with the past; ever bringing before him some spot remembered by romantic reveries, pleasant adventures, holiday rambles or fond partings; and familiar faces glanced by him without the well-known recognition of other years; for he was unrevealed to all by reason of a changed aspect, and durst not make any inquiries, but chose to remain a little longer in suspense.

Presently he knew by the dense monuments which were seen at a distance that he was approaching the village place of graves; and beyond it he saw through the trees the spire of a small church glittering in the last rays of the sun. Here slumbered the generations of those who were once the life of yonder hamlet. A path led transversely over the spot, and it was the daily thoroughfare of those who hoped, and many with a religious trust, at one day to partake of its quiet rest. When he approached the spot sacred to the repose of those whom he had loved, he wavered and stood still, and averted his eyes and trembled. His boyish feelings returned and impetuously swayed his whole soul. As one who gazes upon a dark seal, and puts it away from him unbroken, and anticipates all, he hesitated to read the first intelligence from home. When at last he looked toward the scene he saw an additional white stone, but only *one*, marking the place of another grave. Many reasonings passed through his mind; he was in doubt and perplexity to whom it should belong. Bending over it by the dim light of day, he deciphered the inscription. He was standing over his mother's grave. He remained there a little while, and the tears which fell from his eyes were very silent. Then he directed his steps to the cottage, and seeing nothing but a pile of stones and ashes, and some charred timbers, he sat down wearied on a large stone which used to be the old threshold.

Two young women were drawing water from the well. It was one of ancient construction. An upright trunk of an old tree stood near the spring, and where its first branches had once jutted forth a horizontal beam was pivoted, loaded at one extremity, and so the water-buckets attached to the other were easily drawn up. He longed to taste

the waters ; and rising from where he sat, and begging of them a little to alleviate his thirst, he found them sparkling and sweet as they were wont to be. Oh ! many a time had he drunk of them and been refreshed, and many a time had he looked down upon them in boyhood to see his image, and many a time had he bathed his brow in them when weary, and many a time had he given them to the way-faring man who asked for them, and that too with a spirit which makes a cup of water doubly prized. And now, while he eagerly quaffed them again, his eyes acknowledged the matchless beauty of her who gave the boon ; and as he restored the cup with no ungracious air, he inquired if those who once dwelt there with the exception of her who slumbered in the church-yard still lived, and they answered YES, and they pointed to a cottage dimly seen among the trees.

When he turned away and left them, following the directions which had been given, they whispered eagerly together for a moment, and then one of them leaving her companion sought her own home, and wildly rushed into its doors ; and when inquired of by those who could not comprehend her hurried air, she could only laugh and weep alternately.

#### CHAPTER SIXTH.

WHEN the returned wanderer had followed the direction of the maidens, he came in a few moments to a secluded habitation, and hovered around it in the dusk of the evening, retreating frequently from the threshold, and not knowing how to make his presence known. At last he knocked gently at the door, and a voice which he should have recognized bade him enter. He obeyed the summons, and sat down as a stranger would in the house which afforded him a casual welcome ; but his heart told him that he had found a secure resting-place ; whence, after so many storms, he need not depart again upon his troublesome journey.

Ah ! how like a pleasant picture was the scene which he beheld ! The old clock telling the flight of time in the corner ; the old Bible lying open on the polished stand ; an aged woman, blind and bent down by infirmities, listening attentively, while a beautiful child, whose ringlets fell away luxuriantly from her brow, read to her out of that book. The guest composing himself, would have affected a short concealment, but unrestrained affection wears an ill disguise. For the aged woman arose when he spoke, and her sightless eyes appeared again to beam with pleasure ; and as she took his hand in her own, she said that strange music greeted her ears, for the voice she listened to sounded marvelously like that of *her boy*. So as one detected in an unworthy act he confessed all, and joyfully wept in her embrace. Then she asked him whence he came, and he replied from over the sea.

It takes few words and but a little time to tell the story whose plot and incidents and stirring events up to its dénouement have filled up the weary interval of many years. And when we compute the total amount of all which we have done and suffered, how doth it dwindle

down to a small reckoning. We toil and bustle, and struggle and labor through many a day — and one page suffices to declare the whole! How happily the moments flew beneath the humble roof in listening to the mutual story! And the youth found that prayers had never ceased to ascend for him from one faithful heart, and perchance they had reached Heaven, and were answered at the very moment when he would have despaired. Thus it is that one rushes in some passionate hour to the crisis of his fate, and trembles, while in another clime the taper burns in the obscure chamber, and the prayer goes up which lets loose the guardian angel to stay the guilty hand.

Rumor, which is ever busy, flew over the little neighborhood, and groups of the aged and the young waited not for a better opportunity to gaze upon the lost found. Kindly intrusive, they mingled their tears, and embraces, and exclamations, and eager questions, with those of the small household, and could with difficulty believe the truth. The young man missed indeed the greeting of some who would have given him no less warm a welcome; for it is to be hoped that they had gone whither there is no such thing as partings. But he pressed alone, beneath the holy light of even, the hand which had given him the water to drink at the spring; and that night, beneath the trysting-willow, he kissed the brow which for so many waning moons had been gathering paleness.

A year passed over from the date of these events, and then another aspect presented itself in the youth's dream of life. The church-going bell sounded solemnly, and the long procession winding through the green lanes and alleys paused at the ready-made grave, and ashes were committed to ashes again, and dust to dust. We acknowledge the just debt of nature when the old depart, and brush away the tears which are as bright and sparkling as for the young, not to recur to them again. As well might we weep when the glorious sun sinks down in the sky at evening, or when any glowing light is quenched in darkness, or when flowers having finished their beautiful career drop their petals to the earth, or when the leaves wither and die at autumn, or when the wheat-crop is mowed down by the sickle, golden and fully ripe. And it is better for them, after having smiled with those who have smiled and wept with those who have wept, and passed through all life's checkered scenes and acquitted them of all its duties, and borne all its trials and heroically contended with its powers of evil, to lie down and sleep with patient waiting in the grave!

When the youth returned from paying the last tribute to the old, and passed by his native cottage, he saw it still in ruins, and resolved to rescue the place from long neglect. So ere long he ordered the rubbish to be cleared away, and a new cottage arose from the ashes, and became the abode of hospitality. And its precincts were as sweet and as verdant as ever, and the neglected plants took root and flourished again; and bright faces gathered around the hearth; while, equal to any fortune, he who had been so severely schooled in the past learned not to despair of the future; but burying all his griefs and forgetting all his sorrows in the bosom of his young wife, he experienced once more, and with tears of gratitude, WHAT IT IS TO BE HAPPY.